

SERIAL STORY of Vigorous and Pathetic INTEREST begins NEXT WEEK.

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LIKE A WILD THING RAYMOND ROSE SPRANG UPON EUNICE.

## NO THOUGHT OF TO-MORROW

By the Author of "The Secret of Years,"  
"Wicked Little Hilary," "The Ocean of Life,"  
etc., etc.

### A NOVELETTE.

(COMPLETED IN THIS NUMBER.)

#### CHAPTER I.

LONG narrow strip of low-lying, desolate shore; a weary, weary waste of leaden sea, overhung by a leaden sky; not a boat or a bird in view, no living creature to remove the awful sense of desolation, save one

slender dark-robed girl, who looked almost uncanny in that wild scene.

The wind buffeted her mercilessly; the spray wetted the hem of her garments as she paced restlessly to and fro, heedless of the cruel elements, conscious only of the awful aching of the heart within her breast.

She could not have been more than twenty-two, but she looked older by reason of the stern sadness, the utter despair on her face; in her deep grey eyes—the little lines of pain graven on the low, broad brow.

Her hair had become loosened, and the wind blew it in all its brown luxuriance about her face and throat. Once or twice she thrust it aside with slender, impatient hands—once or twice she turned in sudden, desperate haste towards the unquiet sea, as though she would fain be engulfed in the leaden depths.

And then she spoke. The voice was sweet and refined; but it told of utter weariness, of some great sorrow—perhaps, too, it spoke of want.

"If I dared, if only I dared!" she said. "Oh, what an arrogant coward I am! What is it to die? I have nothing left to live for; and yet—and yet I am afraid of death! If only I could think that when men die they die as the dogs, how easy it would be to do this thing. I have so often resolved to end all my troubles thus, and when the moment comes I shrink back like the veriest coward on earth. It is only the fortunate who should cling to life."

She laughed then—a low, bitter laugh, infinitely sadder than tears—infinite more terrible than loud laments. And a moment later she said:

"I will do it!" and so ran with outstretched

hands, as though to meet her doom; but some unseen power plucked her back, held her fast in a spell, until, with a great shudder, she fell on her knees, hiding her tortured face in her hands.

And so she knelt awhile, with the waves playing about her, the wind buffeting her, and the slow, cold rain falling upon her. Then she staggered to her feet.

"I will go home," she muttered; "but if to-morrow brings me no good thing I will come here again, but I shall not return!"

She began now to be conscious of fatigue, and her steps dragged wearily.

It was a long way from the beach to the little town of Plenderleath, and it lay in such a hollow that it was not visible from the sea-side.

But at last it came in sight—just a long row of old-fashioned houses on either side of a narrow, stony road, with here and there an opening, through which one caught sight of a few small cottages, inhabited principally by the fishermen.

But it was at a small house in the main street that the girl paused. A hard-featured, scrupulously clean woman opened the door to her.

"Dear me, Miss York!" she said, in a quick, sharp voice, "how wet you are! Please rub your shoes carefully; I've but just cleaned the passage. Excuse me, miss, but you must be nigh mad to venture out on such a day."

Her lodger made no reply; but carefully removing all traces of mud or sand from her shoes, went upstairs to the tiny room she rented.

It was very bare, and no fire burned in the grate. She was cold and faint and hungry; but her misery made her oblivious of all these things, and with a little groan she cast herself upon her bed, and lay there with hidden face until Mrs. Strangeways, knocking at the door, entered with a cup of tea.

"Drink this, Miss York. You look most worn to death; and if you won't have a fire lit, you'd better come down to the kitchen. It's warm and comfortable there."

Eunice York thankfully accepted the tea, but declined to go down.

"I have work to do presently," she said, "and can do it best alone. But I am not insensible to your kindness."

"Shall I get you something to eat?"

"No, thank you, I want nothing," and the landlady did not guess how poorly her lodger's little cupboard was supplied with food; how much afraid she was to draw upon that fast vanishing small store of money. She was a keen, practical woman, who never spent a halfpenny more than was absolutely necessary; who never gave one away, but she would never have suffered anyone under her roof to have gone hungry whilst she had the wherewithal to satisfy that hunger. She engaged a little while with Eunice, because her pallor and depression made her anxious. It would be such a cruel expense if the girl fell ill whilst with her. Then, still a great deal worried, she went downstairs; and Eunice, turning his face to the wall, soon slept profoundly, being physically and mentally exhausted.

In the morning when she rose she looked anxiously out for the postman. It was already past his usual time, but Mrs. Strangeways coming in said:

"Looking for old Pipkin, miss? Why, he won't be here for a couple of hours yet. It's St. Valentine's Day, you know."

"I had forgotten that," Eunice answered.

"Forgotten St. Valentine! and you so young! Maybe there'll be one or two for you; for you're a likely lass, if only your cheeks were plumper and rosier (the dairymaid type was the good woman's idea of beauty). Sure you must have a sweetheart somewhere!"

Eunice frowned, but she answered, temperately:—

"You are mistaken, Mrs. Strangeways. I am expecting a business letter."

The landlady smiled incredulously, but made no further remark. Eunice York was

not at all the sort of girl one would presume to treat familiarly, and Mrs. Strangeways felt this; so with some trivial excuse she left the room, and Eunice waited, with what patience she could, for the advent of the one postman Plenderleath boasted.

He came at last, and she watched him with burning, anxious eyes, as he went from door to door, leaving dainty packages and huge envelopes, until at last he came to Mrs. Strangeways, where he delivered only a blue official-looking envelope. With her hand pressed hard upon her throat, Eunice stood, breathing hard and deep, trembling from head to foot, as she heard the landlady's step upon the stairs.

"Here's a letter for you, miss," she said, "but it don't look much as if there's a valentine in it!"

"Thank you!" said Eunice, almost snatching it from her, and closing the door upon her; then she hurriedly tore it open, and at her feet fell a portrait—her own. She let it lie disregarded, whilst with trembling fingers she opened the letter which accompanied it, and then she had to pause before she could read it—such a mist was before her eyes, such an awful gloominess had seized her. But when she had in a measure mastered her emotion, she read:—

"Dear Madam,—

"I have pleasure in announcing your appointment to the vacant situation as governess to the Winttingham Orphan School. The trustees, being satisfied with your reference, will expect you to enter upon duty on the 17th inst.—I remain, dear madam, yours truly,

"CHARLES WARREN."

Eunice fell on her knees beside the bed, and burst into a flood of tears. She tried to control her sobs, but could not. She tried to pray, but no words would pass her lips; but surely Heaven had heard her heart's dumb thanksgiving, and saw her passionate gratitude for help given in this eleventh hour.

So there was some good left in life for her, some work she might do; and when she had grown calmer she began to lay her plans for the future, to think how tender she would be to those young creatures committed to her charge. Orphans like herself, and like herself so poor, they had nothing in all the world to call their own.

Then she summoned Mrs. Strangeways, and with a very uncertain smile, said:—

"I am leaving you on the seventeenth. I have been appointed governess to the Winttingham Orphan School. It is an Asylum for children of clergymen and military men. It has a matron, and I am to take the place of the late governess, who has recently married."

"You're over young, I doubt, for such a post!"

"Oh, there are only fifteen girls, ranging from the ages of fourteen to six, and the trustees consider my experience with Lady Scattergood's children sufficient."

"How did you come to leave such a high family?" asked Mrs. Strangeways, bluntly.

"The children fell ill of a fever, and two died; the other recovered so slowly, and remained so frail, that Lord Scattergood decided to spend two years at Madeira. My services were no longer required; studies of any kind being absolutely forbidden Miss Geraldine. But they treated me with utmost generosity, but for their goodness I must have starved long since. And now, Mrs. Strangeways, I am going to ask you a very great favour" (here the poor girl's face grew crimson). "I have so little money left, only enough to carry me to Winttingham, and if you would accept this ring (it was my mother's, and the only article of value I have kept) in payment, until I can draw my first quarter's salary, and can redeem it, I shall be so glad—so very glad!" and here she paused, abashed, whilst Mrs. Strangeways twisted and turned the beautiful bauble, admiring the changing colours of the opals, and

the beauty of the chasing. Eunice watched her anxiously.

"Well, miss," she said, at last, "I don't want to be hard on a lone girl, and this ring is worth a deal more than you owe me, but right's right, and so I'll take it; and you may have it back as soon as you send me that one pound due, and I can't say fairer than that; and I'm sure I hope you'll be happy and comfortable. But, miss, haven't you any friends who could have helped you a bit in your time of need?"

"I have no friends," Eunice answered, in a low voice.

"What! are they all dead?" and the girl lowered her head. "Dear! dear! but that's sad. However, you'll soon be getting a husband, and then you'll find it better to have no relations of your own."

And when she was gone Eunice still stood looking from the window with wide, anguished eyes.

"Not a friend in all the wide and cruel world!" she whispered. "All lost! all lost! and by my own mad folly! Oh, if I could go back. If I could live again those past three years! If I could call the dead to life and know I was forgiven! Oh, days of my youth—my happy youth! If I could but have one of them back again, I would be content to die at its close!"

But she had little time to indulge in vain regrets. There was much to do before she left Plenderleath. Her scanty wardrobe called for renovation (she had no money with which to purchase a new one), and she was wofully afraid that her first appearance at Winttingham would be a dead failure.

On the seventeenth she travelled to her new home, and on the primitive station she was met by a middle-aged gentleman of good presence and kindly manners, who introduced himself as Charles Warren, chief trustee of the Winttingham charity. Afterwards Eunice learned he was also Squire of the place.

"(Had to see you, Miss York!" he said, cordially. "Of course I know you from your photograph, though you look a trifle older than that. Some of the trustees thought you too young for the post; but I say that children need an instructress not too old to share their thoughts and pursuits. I ventured to accept you because there is no conveyance of any sort from the station to the Orphanage. This way, please!"

She followed him like one in a dream (she had not expected such kindness and consideration), and when he had assisted her into the dog-cart beside him, he said:—

"You will be quite an acquisition to Winttingham society, Miss York. We have so few girls amongst us; and I hope you and Angela (that is my daughter) will soon be great friends. She needs society. Just now she is not very strong," and he sighed, whilst his pleasant face was overcast. "She is my one child, and I am naturally anxious about her."

"Is Miss Warren's illness of long standing?" asked Eunice, scarcely knowing what to say.

"No; it dates from her visit to town. I wish with all my heart she had never gone (this vehemently); she has never been the same since, poor child. I tried to persuade her to come with me to the station; but Angela is over-sensitive, and so refused. I hope, Miss York, that my poor girl will find a kind and wise friend in you."

And he glanced half-wistfully into the beautiful pale, proud face.

Eunice did not understand him then, but she was soon to know Angela's poor little story, and to win her confidence wholly and entirely.

"You are very good to receive me so much on trust," she said, in a low voice, "and to wish my friendship for Miss Warren. You know nothing of me beyond the fact that I once taught Lady Scattergood's children."

"Your face is your best reference," the Squire retorted in a lighter tone. "I am con-





tent to believe in that. See, here is the Orphanage—pretty place, isn't it? Grounds are nice, too, in the summer. And there is Mrs. Wade, the matron, waiting to welcome you. Don't be afraid of her; she is an awful stickler for propriety, but she has a heart of gold!"

The next moment Eunice was being welcomed in a dignified way by a comely and dignified dame, and when she had bidden the Squire good-bye, she was led away to inspect her rooms.

The Orphanage was only two stories high, and Eunice's apartments, which adjoined an airy, lofty schoolroom, were on the ground-floor.

They were large, light, and well-furnished, and the girl gave a sigh of pure gratitude as she looked round. For months she had been unaccustomed not only to luxuries, but almost the necessities of life.

"I shall be happy here," she thought; but to Mrs. Wade she merely said, "I am well satisfied; and now, if you please, I would like to see my pupils."

Mrs. Wade led her to the schoolroom.

"Girls," she said, "this lady is your new governess, Miss York. I hope you will be good and obedient to her, and endeavour to profit by her instructions, so that in after life you may have nothing with which to reproach yourselves."

And then Eunice spoke in her soft, low voice; and the proud face grew gentle as she said,—

"Girls, I will do my best to be not only your governess, but your friend. Like yourselves, I, too, am an orphan."

And with that she shook hands with one and all, only the youngest she lifted in her arms and kissed, and so found her way into their hearts.

## CHAPTER II.

Eunice was soon a great favourite with her pupils, and the quiet, healthy life at Wintingham restored some of her lost bloom to her.

She was a puzzle to the good people around. No one doubted she was a lady, no one questioned her goodness; but all were agreed that there was an atmosphere of mystery surrounding her. She never spoke of her past, she seemed to have no friends; she neither wrote nor received letters. It was strange that one so young and beautiful should be so utterly friendless—should wear so dark a look; for the sweet lips rarely smiled, and the gloom never left the depths of the luminous grey eyes.

Angela Warren was the last to know her, partly because he had been ailing, and partly because she was a wee bit prejudiced against the new governess, of whom her father thought so highly. The girl was suffering her first real trouble, and for the time her gentle, tender nature seemed altogether warped. But after the Squire had prevailed on her to call upon Eunice she forgot all doubts and all preconceived dislike. How could she remember either in that sad and noble presence? She went away greatly impressed by Eunice's beauty, and quite prepared to idealise her. She wrote impossible romances about her (for Angela was of the romantic type), and scarcely a day passed that did not see the heiress drive or walk to the Orphanage. A very real and true friendship sprang up between the girls, which delighted the Squire.

"Dear Miss York," he said, "I am most glad you and my little girl are mutually attached, because I know you will only use your influence over her for good. Poor child, she has fallen into bad hands, and imagines herself madly in love with a fellow I cannot and will not receive. I am sure he is a scoundrel, but of this I cannot convince her! Use your eloquence with her!"

"What can I say or do?" asked Eunice.

"She has confided nothing to me."

"But she will soon of late; and I hope she will listen to you. Poor little girl, she lost

her mother so long ago, and I have been a too indulgent guardian; and now, for the first time in her life, our wills clash, and there is a sense of constraint between us. It is always cruel to lose a child, but it is agony to know that a scoundrel has won what one so much prizes. I tell you," he cried vehemently, "I would rather see Angela borne to her grave than led to the altar by Nigel Fleming."

"Are you quite sure your judgment of Mr. Fleming is just?"

"As sure as I am of my own identity; and what makes the matter worse is, that until Angela went to town I always believed she would marry Clifford Hargrove—you know him—as honest a gentleman as ever wore broad cloth, and she was content to do so until she met that scoundrelly Fleming. I shall always believe that in her innocence she has confided to him she is a great heiress in her own right. She takes possession of her mother's fortune on her twenty-first birthday, which falls on the fourteenth of February next year. I haven't the slightest control over it."

"At least, by watching her carefully you may prevent such a catastrophe as a secret marriage!" Eunice said; "and perhaps before she attains her majority her affection will have died a natural death."

"You don't know Angela if you suppose such a thing. Nothing but the unmasking of Fleming will ever change her regard for him. She is emphatically a hero worshipper, and he has posed as a hero to her. She told me, with an air of such proud faith in him, that my heart ached for her, that he would never urge her to leave me without my consent until a reasonable time had elapsed for her to know her own mind, and me to change mine; that at present her duty was to me. Don't you see the racial drift? No! Well, it is pretty clear to me. He does not intend taking Angela without her money, and that he cannot touch until February next. In the meanwhile, how are they to exist if I refuse to supply their needs? Then, again, the marriage cannot take place now unless he makes a false statement with regard to Angela's age, and if he dared take her out of my custody I swear I would punish him so far as the law permits; it is a hard case for me."

"It is cruelly hard," Eunice said, in a very low voice. "You have my deepest sympathy; and I hope, I pray that, for her own sake and yours, Miss Warren will not sacrifice her father to her lover."

Then when Mr. Warren had gone the governess hid her face in her hands, and groaned aloud,—

"Will my punishment never be ended! Must I live over again all the misery I have endured? It was thus my father felt; it was thus I disregarded all his entreaties, all his commands. Oh, father! oh, my father! do you see and understand all your child's passion of grief and remorse? Do you look down upon me now with forgiveness and love?"

She wept until she had grown calm, and having done her best to obliterate the traces of her tears, went to perform her afternoon duties; and these being ended Angela presented herself.

She was very *petite*, with large violet eyes and fair brown hair; but just now she wore a pensive, not to say melancholy, look, which seemed wholly at variance with her style of beauty.

"You have come to tea!" said Eunice. "We will have it in my parlour."

"That will be nice," answered Angela, languidly, as she followed her friend into the pleasant room. "I hope I shall not be in your way, Miss York, but I positively could not stay at home longer."

"I am glad to have you, dear!" the other said; "but I am afraid Mr. Warren will miss you at table."

"He will not mind. Papa does not need me so much as he used to do; and—and—oh, I hate to say it—but we are happier apart."

Eunice laid both her hands lovingly upon the girl's shoulders.

"You are doing your father an injustice," she said, ever so gently. "He needs you more than ever, loves you more dearly than you can conceive. Oh! Angela, no one will ever love you so unselfishly as he does. Do not wound him by such doubts."

"You know my story," faltered Angela. "Eunice—let me call you so—do not you turn against me, and weary me with worldly reasonings!"

"Come to tea," Eunice answered quietly; "after that you shall tell me all you please," and she would hear no more until the simple meal had been discussed and removed. Then seating herself by the open window (for it was now April, and the evening was a mild one), she drew Angela down upon a stool at her feet, and with one slender hand caressing the girl's bright hair, said, "Now you may tell me all, being well assured I shall not betray your confidence."

"I know that, dear Eunice; and there is no one else to whom I could confide my trouble. And then she hesitated, feeling it a difficult matter to begin; but having once started the task became easy, and it was a relief to her to unburden her poor little heart to this stronger and wiser woman.

"It was at Aunt Gawthrop's we met. She entertains all sorts of people—foreign artists and musicians, political refugees—and the last were always interesting. Among them was Nigel Fleming."

"His name is not foreign!" suggested Eunice.

Oh, no! His father was English, his mother a Polish lady, and he himself was educated as a Pole, and taught to hold his country sacred. He used to tell me of all the wrongs she had suffered until my heart ached. I longed to do something great for the poor, oppressed, down-trodden people; and he had vowed his life to their service. Oh, Eunice, how can papa doubt him, when he himself told me he was quite poor—he had lost his ancient estates because of his patriotism, but he never regretted them. And then when at last he told me he loved me I was glad to think my fortune would help on the righteous cause—proud to know that I should share his labours, his perils, perhaps even his privations. It was, and is, so wonderful, that so great a hero should love so poor a creature as Angela Warren."

"Angela! Angela! you are like all the rest of your sex. You delude yourself to exalt the man you love. You poor child, haven't you learned yet that too many self-styled heroes 'discourse like angels but live like men'?"

"Don't Eunice! I did not expect that you would try to shake my faith in Nigel. I hoped for sympathy and encouragement."

"My sympathy you have; but I must know more of Mr. Fleming before I dare bid you trust him entirely, or love him to the exclusion of your good father."

"Oh," cried Angela, piteously, "you all misjudge me; I love papa as well as ever I did. But not even for his sake can I be false to Nigel; and, Eunice, if only you knew his usefulness you would think me the luckiest of girls. Some men situated as he is would have urged a secret and speedy marriage, but Nigel said, 'Your first duty is to your father. Try to make peace between us, for I hate to think my love can separate you from him. Let us wait patiently until you are your own mistress, and then, if he does not relent, we must take our case in our own hands—and wait for his pardon, which he surely cannot long refuse.'"

Eunice sighed; she read (by most bitter experience) between the lines.

"Don't you think it strange that Mr. Fleming should be so content to wait until you come into your inheritance?" she asked.

Angela's fair face flushed crimson.

"I am sorry I ever spoke of him to you," she said, hotly. "You are like papa, and do not understand! I wish I had not come! I will go now."

"Indeed, you will not," Eunice said, firmly, and pressed Angela into her seat. "You must first hear me. I do not wish to pain you, and if your lover is worthy of you I would not shake your faith in him for worlds. But my dear! oh! my dear! I have seen so much sorrow result from girls taking their own headstrong way, refusing to heed the remonstrances and loving entreaties of those who are most near, and should be most dear to them. Do not be angry or impatient with me, that I speak to you in a fashion you do not wish. I have heard your story. Now let me tell you one. I can vouch for its truth; I knew each of the actors in it. The heroine was (like yourself) an only child. Like you she had lost her mother, and her father idolised her.

"She never had a whim or a wish ungratified until she listened to the plausible story of a man she had exalted into a hero, whom she learned all too soon to love with the love that was to be her doom. Vain were the entreaties of friends, futile her father's commands; she had given her heart once and for all, she would not take it back again. She only loved her love the more because others doubted him; the mystery which enveloped his antecedents only lent him an added charm in her eyes.

"She was wilful, and spoiled by too much indulgence. She never doubted that in the end her father would yield to her entreaties; and when her lover urged her to fly, to give all her life into his keeping, she yielded.

"She was an heiress, or believed herself to be so, but her father had absolute control over his property, and could leave it where he would. She never thought he could be bitter against her, for she had never known him harsh. So, on St. Valentine's Day, she fled with her lover, and they were married at a small obscure church in the City. Then the bride wrote her father, begging his forgiveness, and saying that he had not lost a daughter, but found a good and loyal son. No answer came to her letter, and for days she wondered over her father's silence. Then the dreadful truth was made known to her—her father was dead—that dear parent whose love had made all her young life so bright and glad.

"When her letter was carried in to him, he read it through without a word or a groan, but his face grew white as death, and he looked suddenly like an old man. But after a moment he turned to the waiting servant and bade him summon his lawyer, in a voice as calm as though he felt no pain. That day he made a fresh will, by which all he possessed passed to a distant cousin. Oh! I cannot believe that in calmer moments he would not have pitied and forgiven his child. At his usual hour he retired to rest, and in the morning his valet found him dead in his bed! Oh, Heaven, dead!

"What do you think his daughter suffered then? Do you think she ever will forgive herself for her rash and cruel conduct? And what was the end of it all for her?

"Her husband, the hero for whom she had given up all, for whose sake she had murdered her father (I say murdered advisedly), learning her poverty, turned upon her with oaths and blows. He had never loved her, only her prospective fortune, and when she saw him revealed in all his hideousness she loathed him.

"But her duty was to stay by him, and so she stayed, to be beaten, insulted, abused; at times even her life was in danger. But at the end of six months her husband deserted her, and her first feeling was one of relief; her next that of horror, for he had left her penniless, and there was not a single creature in the world to whom she could or would apply for assistance—to all her friends she was as one dead.

"But in her misery and desolation she fell among good Samaritans, who helped her to obtain work; but being once more cast adrift, and through no fault of her own, finding herself all but starving, she contemplated suicide, and was saved from such a dreadful fate by the merest chance, and at the eleventh hour.

She lives in comfort (which after her privations is affluence) now; but Angela! my dear Angela, do you ever think she can be glad or gay again? (and she is young yet), with the memory of her sin against her father still burdening her conscience, with the knowledge that by her own hand she worked out all the evil and bitter things that have befallen her?"

Angela was almost as white as Eunice; but under her breath she said,—

"Eunice, is this your own story?"

With a half sob the other answered, "Yes."

"And is he—that dreadful man, dead?"

"I do not know. Sometimes I wish he were, so that he could work no further harm. I am a wicked woman, but my sufferings have made me so. I used not to be so once."

But Angela was not listening to her. Her thoughts were busy with other things.

"In all good faith you have warned me against Nigel, not knowing him; but, because you found your lover false and vile am I to doubt the man who has honoured me so far as to ask me to be his wife?"

"Angela, have you ever read that wonderful book 'Hypatia'? No? Well there is one poor frail woman in the story called Pelagia. Her experience of love is such that she says, 'In spite of the poisoned hearts around us, we persuade ourselves that our latest asp's egg, at least, will hatch into a dove; and that though all men are faithless, our own tyrant can never change, for he is more than man!' Heaven grant your lot may be brighter than mine!"

### CHAPTER III.

"ANGELA, let me speak to you a moment!" The girl turned a flushed and troubled face upon the speaker—a tall, broad-shouldered, honest-looking young fellow.

"I would rather not listen, if you please," she said, trying to speak easily. "The last time we talked together we quarrelled. I don't wish a repetition of that scene!"

"Mine was not the fault!" he broke in so vehemently that his statement was rather open to doubt. "I only remarked upon your changed manner, and you instantly flew into a passion, as though I had insulted you!"

"And so you did, Mr. Hargrove. You meddled with matters which could not possibly concern you. You questioned me in quite an offensive manner regarding certain reports you had heard."

"I thought you had given me the right to do so," he said, sadly. "Certainly you once gave me reason to hope that you were not quite indifferent to me."

"If I did so I am very sorry, Clifford; but we were both so young, and I was not sure of my own mind. It is more than a year ago now, and cannot you forget?"

"As you have done? No; unfortunately, my memory is a trifle more retentive. Last year you accepted my valentine with apparent pleasure, and more than half promised in the future to give yourself to me."

Angela looked distressed, and her lovely eyes were suffused with tears as she lifted them to his eager face.

"If I did so I am ashamed, and sorry too; but I was carried away by your vehemence. I had known you all my life, and if I mistook sisterly affection for love was I so very much to blame? Clifford, forgive me. If I have made you miserable how can I be happy?"

"Dearest!" he said, earnestly, and against her will taking possession of her hands. "Dearest, cannot you cast off the glamour which blinds you now? Cannot you learn to love me first and best? Your father wishes it, and all my life's happiness lies in your hands."

"Eunice was right," the girl cried, impatiently. "She said not one man in a thousand ever really loves—that only one man in a thousand loves for love's sake—that the 'nobler sex' considers first their own happiness, and then ours."

The young man loosed her little trembling

hands. His face was deadly pale, and his voice was ominously quiet as he said,—

"If you have found the one man in a thousand you have my sincere congratulations; but it would be well never to exercise your eloquence upon him as you exercise it on me. Even the 'one man in a thousand' might resent your gratuitous insults," and with that he strode away.

And when he had walked a short distance Angela's gentle heart relented, and she called, softly,—

"Clifford! Clifford! do not leave me in anger!" but he would neither pause nor look back; and feeling miserably she had been just a little too hard upon her luckless lover, she went sadly in the opposite direction.

"Why will they all conspire to speak ill of Nigel?" she thought. "Why do they all work together to compass my sorrow? Oh, my dear, oh, my dear love! Though all the world were league against you I would still hold you precious, believe you true!" and then in her innocent heart she prayed for the lover she considered a hero and a martyr.

Then suddenly through an opening in the wood she saw a figure approaching, and all the colour left her lovely, childlike face, as she stood incapable of motion, sick and dazed with rapture, for there before her was Nigel—her own Nigel.

He advanced rapidly.

"Darling, are you afraid of me that you would not stir a step to meet me?" he asked, in a low, wooing voice. "Are you not glad to see me? My dear one, I know it is a mad thing to come here, but I was so hungry for the sight of your face that I yielded to temptation. Why are you so pale and silent?"

"Let me have time—I can hardly breathe. The surprise and joy of seeing you have left me faint and giddy. Oh, Nigel! is it really you?" and one slender arm stole caressingly round his neck. "It is too good to be true!"

"Isn't this proof enough that I am I?" he asked, as he kissed the tremulous lips. "What other man has a right to salute you in like fashion? Now, Angela, let me look into your eyes, and see if you love me still the same. Of course your friends have warned you a thousand times against the penniless Pole. Are they succeeding in weaning your love from me, just the least bit in the world?"

"Oh, Nigel! no! You are dearer to me than all else beside, and only by your own confession could I be induced to believe evil of you. Are you not quite sure of my loyalty, that you speak to me in this fashion?"

He held her closer.

"My darling! my darling! I do not doubt you; but you are so lovely, so winsome, there is many a man would be glad to 'win and wear' you. Then I am poor whilst you are a great heiress. With all my heart I wish it was otherwise; but loving you as I do with all my strength, I could not lightly let you slip. Do you wonder, sweetheart, that I am often oppressed with fears and doubts for the future. We have so many enemies to contend with, and who knows what force your father might bring to bear upon you? I heard it said, too, that you would marry Clifford Hargrove."

"It is utterly false! Oh, surely you know that I shall never marry any man but you; and oh! if you could care for me I should die!"

"I will love you always," he said, and looking into his face she believed him; there were few girls who would not.

It was such a handsome face of the Velasquez type, olive tinted, lit up by the great, dark, passionate eyes, which just now were very tender; and the girl said, with a little sob of utter gratitude,—

"How could you love so poor a creature as I—I who am so simple and so stupid!"

"That you are stupid I deny, and your simplicity is your chiefest charm. I like to think of you as ignorant of the world,



unspoiled by flattery. There is not one on earth to compare with my little wild rose!"

"You think too highly of me," Angela remonstrated. "Oh, Nigel! I hope I shall never disappoint you. I know my own unworthiness and my shortcomings, and am trying daily to conquer them."

"I like you best as you are. A creature not too bright or good, you know the rest of the quotation. Now tell me how things have been with you since we parted?"

"Papa has been kindness itself to me—he always is; but oh, Nigel, I do not feel really as grateful as I ought, I am always blaming him (in my heart) because he does not see you with my eyes; but in time he must. Oh! I should be miserable if I thought otherwise. We must be patient, and—"

"And should he never relent, what then, sweetheart?"

She grew pale as death, and her voice was shaken with emotion as she answered,—

"I shall keep the promise I gave you, although it will go far to break my heart to leave him lonely."

A flash of triumph flashed across the handsome face—he was so sure of her now. But he only said,—

"Mr. Warren need not be lonely long. I shall be proud and glad to give him a son's duty, a son's affection."

Then he began to tell her of his work, the noble cause for which he laboured, and she listened with shining eyes and proudly beating heart.

But all too soon came the time for parting. In a rapid way Nigel Fleming gave directions concerning the posting and receiving of their letters, and she promised obedience to his wishes in all things.

She was a good girl, and until this wild love took possession of all her nature had never willfully disregarded any of her father's injunctions, had never hidden any act or thought of hers from him.

Alas! alas! for Charles Warren he was no longer first in his daughter's love. It is the way of the world, but it is none the less hard for parents to feel this truth, which at first must be so bitter to bear.

"I shall not come again, *mignonne*. It would neither be wise nor well; but I will write you often. I wonder if you can guess how long the time of waiting will seem to me? Little witch, little darling, good-bye, good-bye!"

And then she stood alone in the budding woods, and through fast-falling tears watched his retreating form, and cried under her breath,—

"Come back! come back!"

But Nigel did not turn. He was in haste to catch the up-train, and just a little weary of the rôle he had been playing.

"By Jove!" he thought, "she does care for me. There isn't the slightest doubt about that any more than there is of her fortune. 'Once bitten twice shy.' And I do not intend to be cheated of my heiress a second time. I am glad I came, though. It has made assurance doubly sure. I didn't at all like that rumour about Angela and young Hargrove. How was I to know that absence had not made her grow fonder—of someone else? Scott! if the old man should surrender, what a lucky dog I shall be, for, of course, he would leave the estates to Angela! Nigel, my boy, you might do worse!"

This, then, was poor Angela's hero and demi-god—a creature of the commonest clay—one from whom, could she have seen him as he was, she would have shrunk with utmost loathing.

For days after his departure she went about with a sort of glory upon her face, her father and Eunice regarding her wonderingly; the former a little suspiciously.

One day he took the slender hands in his, and, looking earnestly into her eyes, asked:—

"My child, are you going to make me glad by telling me you are forgetting that fellow Fleming?"

Her face flushed crimson, but she answered bravely:—

"I shall never forget him, father. I love him with all my heart."

The Squire released her with a sigh, then said so abruptly that she was startled:—

"Then what is the meaning of this change in you? You are more like my own child than you have been for months!"

And when Angela was silent he urged:—

"Have you seen him lately? By Jove! you have! I wish I had caught him, I would have thrashed him within an inch of his blackguard life! Do you correspond with him? Answer me! I will be obeyed!"

The Squire's rages were terrible, and the frightened girl answered:—

"I have never made an appointment with Nigel, but I have seen him once."

"And against my wish you write him often—secretly, and receive letters in reply. Is it so?"

"Oh! father, dear father! do not be angry with me. You left me no other course to follow, and I love him so. Why are you so unjust to him, so cruel to me? You deny me nothing but this one thing—and this one thing alone means happiness for me."

Mr. Warren rose and went to the window. He would not let his child see the anguish on his face.

"You say well, Angela, when you say that in all your life I have denied you nothing upon which your heart was set until now. Year in and year out, since your mother died I have laboured to make your youth bright and glad, that you should never miss a mother's love, a mother's care. For myself I have asked nothing but your full and perfect confidence and affection. The one you have withdrawn, the other a stranger has easily wrested from me. Now, when I, for the first time, am a mentor to you, you turn a deaf ear to my pleading."

Angela burst into distressful tears.

"Ask me anything else, father!"

"I have nothing else to ask, no other thing to desire," coldly.

"I cannot obey you in this. Oh, my dear, oh, my dear! are you bent upon breaking my heart? My duty bids me cleave to you, my love cries out for him. I cannot give him up!"

"Hundreds of times I have foolishly pitied the childless folks of my acquaintance. Now, I envy them; now I can say with Lear, 'Sharper than a serpent's tooth is an ungrateful child.'"

"Father!" and with a bitter cry she sprang to his side, seeking to throw her arms about him, but he coldly set her aside.

"Such symbols of affection are of small worth; when my daughter has learned to obey me, to consider my wishes in a measure, we may resume our old relationship, but until such a time comes we never can be the same."

And then he went out, leaving her to her own most bitter thoughts. Of course he was unjust, cruelly unjust to Nigel, thought this poor, infatuated girl, but perhaps it was his very love for her that made him so; perhaps he was jealous that any other should usurp his place in her heart. And yet no! that could not be, for often and often he had advocated Clifford Hargrove's suit.

"Oh, he is cruel!" she said, again and again, "he is cruel, and yet he loves me, poor father! dear father! I wish I had a mother to whom I could unburden. Eunice is good and wise, but she has had such bitter experience that she thinks all men false and wicked. Nigel! my darling, there is none of them understand you, love you, but me!"

And then she read his last letter again—the letter which was eloquent with vows and sweet, poetic fancies, the letter which was as false as he who wrote it; and a happy calm fell upon the girl. She was so young, too, that hope sprang up again in her breast, and a sweet assurance that in time all would be well.

When the Squire returned he did not refer

by word or look to their recent interview, and in all the days that followed no harsh word fell from his lips. He surrounded her with every luxury, every pleasure, consulted her wishes in all things, until often at night when she knelt to pray Angela would cry:—

"Heaven forgive me, that I hurt him! Heaven bless him for his goodness, and teach me how to repay him."

#### CHAPTER IV.

In June, a number of new books being required for the Orphanage, the trustees decided to despatch Eunice to town to procure them. Mrs. Wade, of course, could not accompany her, and, with the exception of the vicar's wife, she had no friend to chaperone her, so she went alone.

She travelled by express, and the journey being short, her business soon concluded, she found she had several hours to spend before returning; so she strolled into St. Paul's. A service was being held in one of the chapels, and she sat down to listen; but her thoughts soon wandered away to the last occasion of her visit there. It was long ago, but once more she saw the faces of her old-time companions, heard the soft murmurs of their hushed voices, remembered how bright and goodly had been the promise of her opening youth, and bowed her head in wordless pain. Then she leant upon her father's arm—now he lay cold and silent in his narrow bed, whither his daughter's hand had thrust him, and in her heart she prayed, "Heaven be merciful to me, a sinner."

The service ended, she rose and moved like one in a dream from group to group of life-like figures which celebrated heroic men and their splendid deeds; of battles fought and won, of sufferings nobly and patiently borne, until a sense of peace and rest fell upon her.

As she issued from the doors the noise and bustle of the great city, after the quiet of the cathedral, half-deafened and wholly confused her, so that she took small heed of her steps, or the hurrying passers-by; and coming violently in contact with a gentleman, uttered a sharp cry, followed by the first words of a hasty apology. It was brought to a sudden close as she lifted her eyes to the face above, and all the blood fled from her cheeks, a great fear shook her from head to foot. The man, too, recoiled, and in recoiling uttered the one word:—

"Eunice!"

Dumb she stood before him, white of lip and wild of eye, wholly incapable for the moment of speech or thought.

A low, mocking laugh broke upon her startled senses. Her acquaintance or friend had quickly recovered his *sang froid*, and his handsome face wore a half-amused, half-angry air.

"Faith! You do not seem delighted at this *rencontre*, my amiable wife! Haven't you a word to throw at a dog after three long years of separation? Or are you so overjoyed to see me yet in the land of the living that you find words altogether inadequate to express your rapture?"

The white lips took a bitter curve, and a hard look came into the lovely eyes, as she heard the mocking speech, the taunting laugh. With a desperate effort she forced herself to say,—

"I was taken by surprise. I did not expect to meet you here, Raymond Rose. I have sometimes thought (you left me so long unmolested) that you were dead."

"And doubtless hoped that I was. I know your affectionate disposition; but I never was in better health or better luck. Eunice, will you come back to me?"

She looked at him in horror.

"No, a thousand times no. I would die first, and you cannot compel me to do so, having once deserted me."

"How profound our legal knowledge is! No, the last thing on earth I should desire would be your constant presence. You were never very tractable, my wife, and I see no

reason to believe you have changed. But I want to talk to you; and folks are looking curiously at us. Turn back with me. Naturally I am anxious to hear what you are doing. You seem in comfortable circumstances," with a glance at her neat costume. "How do you contrive to live?"

"I am a governess."

"Not a very lively sort of life. Does it pay? Oh, don't look so scared. I am not going to ask for charity where I know it would be refused, and just now I am in luck's way; shortly I expect to bag bigger game still. Oh, by-the-way, where are you living?"

"Where, please Heaven, you shall never find me."

"Don't alarm yourself, I haven't any intention of dogging you. We did not hit it off so nicely that we should care to see much of each other. Are you thinking of marrying again?"

And then he laughed at the horror and disgust her face expressed.

"Are you human?" she said, under her breath. "Oh, Heaven! to think I should have wasted all my years, wrecked all my life, for such a creature as this. Because I am your wife do you think I must naturally be as base and defiled as yourself? How could I ever have dreamed I loved a thing so low?"

And then one of those sudden curious street rushes occurred, and in the hurry and rush Eunice made good her escape.

Trembling in every limb, she reached her station, and through all the homeward journey she could think of nothing but this meeting—of the handsome, mocking face of the man she once had worshipped, for whose unworthy sake she had broken her father's heart.

Pale and dazed, she reached Wintringham, and that night her pallor and dejection were attributed to fatigue; but as the days wore by, and found no change in her, both Angela and Mrs. Wade began to wonder in their own minds what had happened.

The former thought, "I have confided all to her, but she does not trust me. She is keeping something from me," and so a cloud arose between the two friends.

Eunice could not compel herself to tell of this wretched meeting, or how greatly she feared Raymond Rose would discover her hiding-place. She knew the man's craft and subtlety, and not for an hour could she feel safe in her quiet home.

Peace was gone for her, and she began to look sadly like the Eunice of Splendorleath days, when the future lay dark before her, and only starvation or suicide stared her in the face.

Swiftly the weeks and months flew. Harvest was past, and now came autumn—such an autumn—with blue skies and soft west winds, so that one forgot how near winter was at hand; and all the world lay lapped in loveliness.

But at Wintringham there were few glad hearts.

Eunice was ill at ease. The Squire felt miserably that soon Angela would be legally beyond control, and the girl herself was wretched, knowing how quickly she would be called upon to decide between lover and father.

She grew restless and variable in her moods, withdrawing more and more into herself, confiding in none; and none could reproach her more bitterly than she did herself that she it was who had brought that cloud upon her father's brow. It almost broke her heart to see how fast the brown hair was whitening, to notice that now he never laughed, and very rarely smiled.

Autumn passed, winter came and went, a New Year dawned, and Angela was sick at heart indeed. Noticing her pale looks, her father surrounded her with every care, every loving observance, and there was not a kindly act of his, a gentle word, that did not go far to break down her composure.

It was not easy for her to give up home and parents for the sake of Nigel; and yet such was the strength of her love, the fascination he exercised over her, that he had but to say come, and she would go to him.

February came, and the days seemed to fly to the wretched girl. Like a ghost she wandered from room to room, unable to rest—unable to think of anything save the grief her father would suffer at her flight.

"But he will forgive me!" she thought. "Oh! he must; and soon we shall all be happy together—Nigel, he, and I!" and so she tried to comfort herself and excuse her own rash and undutiful conduct.

One evening the Squire called her to him. "Are you ill?" he asked, anxiously. "You have grown so thin and frail, and I never hear you singing about the house. What is the trouble, child?" and he drew her down on his knees.

She longed to tell him all—to unburden her heavy heart; but she dared not, so she answered, as lightly as she could,—

"Nothing ails me, dear (you are fanciful where I am concerned); but the intense cold has tried me a little, I think, and I have found things a trifle dull."

"No doubt," eagerly. "Why did you not say so earlier, Angela? I ought to remember you are young and naturally fond of society; but I am so content with you alone that I often forget you need more pleasure. All that shall be altered, Angela, and as we cannot begin too soon, we will give a ball on the fourteenth."

"Oh, no! no!" she cried, quickly. "Wait awhile, papa. I—I would rather spend my birthday quietly, and—I do not feel quite equal to the task of entertaining many guests."

He looked intently at her.

"Are you hiding anything from me, Angela? Are you not so strong as you profess? Is there anything that troubles you?"

"There is nothing. Have I not all a girl can desire? Oh, father! oh, my dear father! I wish I could make you understand how dearly I love you, how grateful I am for all your goodness!"

"Let there be no question of gratitude between us, my girl," he answered, gently; "and by my own heart I judge yours. Nothing would ever make me doubt your affection."

"Nothing?" she asked, faintly, "not even the pain I have given you, not any act of mine? Not even seeming neglect?"

"I should not be an unmerciful judge. Don't you know that love is kind, and suffers long?"

She hid her face on his shoulder and clung about him then almost wildly.

"Oh, my dear! oh, my dear! whatever comes you will never lose your child!" and the man's strong heart rejoiced, believing that she was resolving to forego her unhappy passion for his sake.

He was very bright and cheerful in the few days that intervened between the first and fourteenth of February, and amongst themselves the servants remarked that "master must have had pleasant news" to work so great a change in him.

On the thirteenth he and Angela dined alone, and when he joined her in the drawing-room he begged her once again to let him hear the music of her voice.

She dared not refuse, although song seemed impossible to her. She was nervous and sick with pain, but she struck a few chords boldly and broke into a spirited ballad. All sentimental themes she left severely alone.

Now the Squire was a lover of music, although he understood nothing of the art; but he liked to hear Angela sing old-fashioned ballads in her sweet soprano, and as the evening wore by he begged for "Home, Sweet Home."

It was the last song in the world she would have chosen, but she had so much to conceal that she dared not refuse lest she should awaken his suspicions.

So she began in an uncertain voice to render the first verse, and then a crowd of memories came rushing back upon her. She thought of all her father's love, of his patience with her through her ailing childhood, of his indulgence

through all her life, and she hated herself for her deceit. She had never understood its full enormity until now.

"An exile from home splendour dazzles in vain," sang the quavering voice, and then it died suddenly out, and bowing her face upon the keys, Angela burst into a wild flood of tears.

In an instant the Squire was beside her, had lifted her from her seat, and, laying her upon a couch, forced her to drink some brandy, which he brought from a sideboard.

"My child! my child!" he cried. "What is it? Are you more ill than you will say? Or are you grieving still for him? Is there anything for you to tell me?"

"Nothing, nothing," she answered. "I am only weak and silly; and that song always affects me strangely. Forgive me, dear, I was foolish; but see, I am myself again now," and she pitifully smiled. "I will not vex you any more with my tears."

She clung about him, so passionately besought him to believe in her undying love for him, that the Squire was alarmed.

Her mother had died so young, and this girl was so like her in ways and words that a great dread filled his heart lest she, too, should be snatched away from him.

He held her close and, praying her to be calm, kissed her many times, and it was surely no shame to him that tears were in his own honest eyes.

"Father," she said, under her breath, "I have not always been a good child to you. I have given you many sorrowful hours, and have brought grey threads into your brown hair, but, with all my wicked willfulness, I love you, oh! most dearly, most truly. You never will doubt that. If anything should come between us, if—I should die to-night—you would try to remember me kindly as I used to be before I—I learnt love's lesson. With all my heart, I thank you, I bless you for your un-failing goodness, and I wish—oh, Heaven! I wish I had been a better daughter to you!"

"Angela! Dear child, why are you talking so strangely? I shall send for Dr. Brougham to-morrow. You are most morbid. Why, little woman, you should be all smiles to-night, because the morning will come laden with gifts for you. Your birthday. Why, Angela, you are a woman. What an old man I am getting! But a happy birthday to you, sweet, and many of them."

"You should not have congratulated me beforehand, that brings ill luck," and then, half-languishing, half-crying, she bade him good-night and left him.

## CHAPTER V.

Important business called the Squire out early the following morning. Angela was not down, but he was careful to leave his gift beside her plate. She found, too, a parcel, which proved to be a book of poems from Clifford Hargrove; over the first she shed some tears, but Clifford's gift she thrust half-angrily aside.

How dare he insult her by his presents, knowing that she had no love for him!

She made a slight pretence of eating, and then stole up to her room to dress. She trembled so she could scarcely stand, and her heart beat so thick and fast it all but choked her.

But soon her toilet was completed, and, stealing like the guilty thing she was, to the Squire's study, she left a slip of paper upon his desk, and then stole out, unperceived by any.

At the lodge gates she paused, looked back with fast streaming tears and outstretched hands, moaning,—

"Father! father! oh, my dear, good-bye!" Then again as she hurried down the bleak road, "Nigel! you should love me much, seeing how much I surrender for your sake!"

She chose a roundabout route, not wishing to pass the Orphanage lest Eunice should see her, and by her agitated manner guess all the truth; but at last she reached the station,



and she took train to Finsbury Park, where Nigel was to meet her.

All her instructions were clear, she could make no mistake—and was she not going to the man she loved? Yet with all her heart she began, ere half her journey was ended, to wish she had never undertaken it.

She could only remember Eunice's sad story; and the fact that she, too, had taken her fate into her hands on St. Valentine's Day struck coldly upon her.

Suppose on the morrow her father, her dear and honoured father, were to be discovered dead in his bed, slain by her hand? She would have gone back then had it been possible.

At Finsbury Park Nigel met her, and did his best to dissipate her fears and doubts.

"It is all right, sweetheart," he said, caressingly. "I have got the licence and everything is arranged comfortably; as soon as you are my wife I will take you back to Winttingham, and together we will plead for pardon."

She tried to smile, but her smile was closely allied to tears. She was going from her safe and sheltered home to a life all untried, unproved—going without a friend by her side—and against her father's will. There was small wonder she should be depressed.

Meanwhile, the Squire having transacted his business, hastened home because it was "the little one's birthday."

But she had gone out, and the house seemed strangely quiet. He went into the breakfast-room; his gift, a handsome locket, lay upon the table with Clifford's offering. It was not like Angela to be so careless of her treasures. He went on to his study, where his desk stood open, and on it he saw a slip of paper covered with a few hasty lines.

His heart stood still, and a great dread attacked him as he took possession of Angela's message. It was short and to the point:—

"Darling, I have left home to become Nigel's wife. I go with tears and bitter grief, for however much I have disobeyed and thwarted you, I hold no one so dear as you—save Nigel. Forgive me if you can. Send me some message of love; and oh! remember that I am only waiting for your permission to return, and be all that I have hitherto been to you—ANGELA."

He stood like one turned to stone. She was gone, his little one, his pretty one! It might be even now too late to save her from the clutches of the hawk! Oh, if she had only trusted him! What should he, what could he do? Perhaps even now she had spoken the words which made her Nigel Fleming's for life. If so, he had no power to help her. Was she not of age? Then he thought of Eunice, and catching up his hat, rushed out and towards the Orphanage.

The governess was sitting amongst her girls, but he dismissed them imperiously, and tendering Angela's note to her, said:—

"Help me! Tell me what to do! I am bewildered!"

"We must follow her. Perhaps we may be in time to save her yet," Eunice answered. "I will go with you—wait." She ran into the hall, quickly returning, wearing a plain black hat and cloak. "I am ready," was all she said, and so they started on their quest.

The train did not pause until Finsbury Park station was reached. There everything was in a state of commotion, and on inquiring they found some slight accident had occurred between their halting-place and Broad Street.

The Squire was furious. This delay might mean the utter loss of his daughter. He offered almost fabulous sums to those around to convey him to Broad Street. He was told it was impossible. The line must be cleared; and he was obliged to possess his soul with patience.

It was quite two hours before the journey could be continued, but when they reached Broad Street they found the officials still in a state of excitement.

The accident had been more serious than was at first supposed. One or two passengers were severely shaken, notably a young lady who had been travelling first class in company with her supposed husband.

They were now in the waiting-room, with a medical man in attendance. It was not thought that any bones were broken, but the patient looked delicate, and was now hysterical.

Mr. Warren, tipping the man for his information, hurried Eunice towards the waiting-room, from which the doctor was just emerging.

"How is the patient?" he asked, quickly. "Is there any danger?"

"None whatever, and she may safely continue her journey. She was slightly bruised and very much unnerved, but she is quiet enough now. If you are a friend you may see her at once," and, lifting his hat, he disappeared amongst the crowd.

Mr. Warren, with Eunice on his arm, pushed open the door. On the hard sofa lay a slender figure, with bright hair widespread upon the pillows, and bending over that figure was another which bore a too familiar look to Eunice.

"You cannot come in," said a deep, mellow voice. "This lady is ill!" and as he veered round the Squire saw the handsome face of Nigel Fleming.

"You villain!" he cried. "You would rob me of my child! Angela, my dear one, come home!" and he went hastily towards her.

Eunice stood in the background. No one thought of her, no one glanced towards her then; and Angela, feebly rising, stretched out her shaking hands towards her father.

"Dear, forgive us!" she said. "You left us no other alternative."

"Are you married yet?" asked her father, hoarsely.

"No; but we shall be soon," answered Nigel, coolly. "This unfortunate accident has delayed the ceremony. Will it not be best for you to give it your countenance? By so doing you will prevent all scandal."

"I will never assist at my daughter's execution. Angela, come home! By all the love I bear you, by all the happy years we have lived together, return with me. It is true I cannot compel your obedience—"

"No, sir," interrupted Nigel. "The law is with us. There is nothing now to prevent our union."

"Nothing!" said Eunice, stepping forward. "Not even the fact that you have a living wife, Raymond Rose?"

At the first sound of her voice Fleming started and turned; and as his eyes met those accusing ones, he knew the game was lost. With a reckless laugh, he said:—

"So you have found me out? Ah! well, the play is played out, and now that you have ruined me, perhaps you are content. Yes, I acknowledge you as my wife—my dutiful and longing wife; and as for you, well, your place is by my side. The law gives me some authority over you, and I shall use it!"

"You have lost it already by your desertion of me," she answered, in a low, hard voice.

"Mr. Warren, take away your daughter. This man—her lover—is my husband, Raymond Rose!"

Angela crept to his side.

"Is it true? Is it true?" she questioned, wildly. "Had I never any right to love you? Would our marriage have been a mockery and a sin? Have you deceived me all along?"

"If you put it so, yes," he answered, brutally.

She gave one low, heart-broken cry, and flung herself on the Squire's breast.

"My father! my father! take me home! The shame of this will kill me!"

"Hush! hush! my dear one! If there is punishment for such sins as his, rest assured he shall not go free."

"You forget that, in publishing his crimes, you make Angela's name a subject for common gossip, common scandal," Eunice said. "Let

him go; let this chapter in your lives be forgotten. Mr. Warren, look to Angela, she has fainted"; and whilst the Squire was intent upon his daughter, Nigel Fleming, or more correctly, Raymond Rose, turned to his pale, stern young wife.

"You shall repent your interference the longest day you live. If I die for it I will have my revenge. Do you hear?"

"Yes; I hear."

"You have been my curse from the day I took you from home. You spoiled all my best schemes for advancement. You brought me poverty in lieu of riches; and now, when everything seemed within my grasp, you have snatched away the prize. I shall have my revenge yet. I never forget, I never forgive."

The lovely proud face was bent upon him, the luminous eyes were full of a scorn to deep for fear to touch it, and he realised as had no longer any power to hurt her.

In a paroxysm of impotent rage, he lifted his hand and struck her heavily upon the cheek, so heavily that the ring he wore left a cruel mark upon it, a mark Eunice would carry to the grave. Then, before the Squire really understood what had occurred, he rushed out; and was lost to sight.

Half-fainting, quite prostrated by anguish and shame, they bore Angela back to Winttingham. She seemed incapable of speech or movement, hardly conscious of the loving ministrations of her companions.

All through the journey she never spoke a word, but lay back amongst the cushions with closed eyes and white face. But her thoughts were busy.

The man for whom she had left her home, the man she had exalted into a hero, was Eunice's husband. He had wrecked Eunice's life, sent her father to an untimely grave; was "falsely than all fancy fathoms," more vile than the heart could conceive.

Oh! how blind and wicked she had been! How could she ever atone for her folly and cruelty? And, seeing her lover as he was, she questioned, "How could I ever have dreamed I held him dear?"

It was dark when they reached home, and Eunice, refusing to enter, kissed her friend's pale cheek. Angela neither spoke nor returned her caress—she was too bitterly ashamed.

Her father carried her into the breakfast-room, where a bright fire was burning, and there he left her to the housekeeper's care, remarking merely that:—

"Miss Angela was fatigued with the day's excursion, and needed both refreshment and rest."

Quite late in the night, when he sat ta'p'ing sadly before the fire, he fancied he heard the swish of trailing garments, and, looking up, saw Angela standing in the open doorway.

When she met his eyes, when she saw his outstretched welcoming hands, she went hurriedly forward, and before he could prevent her had fallen on her knees, and, with her arms embracing him, cried passionately:—

"Forgive me! oh, my darling father! forgive your wicked and ungrateful child!"

He tried to raise the bowed, bright head, to lift the sweet, white face, but she resolutely opposed his efforts saying:—

"Let me kneel here; it is my rightful place, here at your feet, dear, until I have confessed all my sin and folly, until I know that one day you will pardon and forget them both. Oh, father! oh, my father! I am humbled to the dust!" and then he would hear no more, but lifting her in his arms placed her on his knee, and if his tears were mingled with hers was that any shame to him?

Long into the night they sat talking with each other. There was so much to be confessed, so much to be forgiven. Perhaps they had never before understood each other so well—perhaps their love had never before been so perfect and so pure.

At last they found time to speak of Eunice—poor Eunice, whose life lay so dark and dreary before her.

"You have suffered cruelly, my dear one," said the Squire; but your lot is most blessed when compared with hers, for she is bound to him. Thank Heaven! oh, thank Heaven! we were in time to save you from a most awful fate!" and the girl silently echoed that thanksgiving.

She had long been ailing and nervous; so that when the morrow came, and she was unable to rise, no one thought it strange or commented upon it.

She was sick with shame and horror—shame that she could have loved so vile a creature as Nigel Fleming—horror that, but for Eunice's interposition, she would have been an object of pity to some, of scorn to others. She felt then she never could meet her old friends, or face the world again.

But by-and-by, as her physical health improved, so did her mental, and although she was very subdued in ways and words, and preferred solitude to society, she did not shrink from the friends who sought her—at least, with one exception. Clifford Hargrove she would not, or could not, meet at present. She had been cruel to him. What wonder if he triumphed now in her humiliation?

#### CHAPTER VI.

The old familiar intercourse was renewed between the two girls; but Angela saw with pain that Eunice was nervous and ill at ease. She started at the slightest sound, and seemed constantly watching and waiting for someone's coming.

"What is it you fear?" Angela asked.

"That my husband will discover my hiding-place. It will be easy for him to do so now, knowing as he does that in some way I am connected with you."

"I do not think you need have any fear. He will hardly venture to come to Wintingham again."

But Eunice shook her head.

"You do not know him as I do. There is nothing he would not do to revenge himself upon me, or make my life a little harder, a little worse to bear," and the sequel showed she was right.

Early in April, as Angela was returning from one of her long rambles, she saw, with a sudden sense of fear, Raymond Rose approaching her.

She remembered how once she had met him in this same spot with glad smiles and loving words, and the remembrance, whilst it oppressed her with shame, filled her with indignation that he should presume to seek her again.

He approached jauntily, with not the least trace of embarrassment in his face or manner, and boldly offered his hand.

Angela started back, her cheeks flaming crimson, and her eyes flashing.

"How dare you so insult me?" she demanded. "Stand aside, Mr. Rose, and allow me to pass!"

"Not yet," he answered, planting himself firmly before her. "I have something to say to you. And may I remind you that you used not to greet me so distantly a short while ago?"

The man's effrontery sickened her. How could she ever have loved such a shameless scoundrel, and she made answer with more spirit than he had ever believed she possessed.

"I could not conceive that even you would be vile enough to remind me of what is my shame and your sin. I loved you once, or dreamed I did; but that is all ended, and now I loathe you so bitterly that I would rather die than be compelled to spend a month—a week in your society."

"You sang a different tune once," coarsely. "But I am not surprised you should be angry. It is not pleasant to be made the butt of one's friend's ridicule," and then he suddenly changed his tone and manner, assuming a humility which set ill upon him. "I know I acted like a villain, but at least I had the excuse of loving you!"

"My fortune was the real object of your

love," she interrupted, coldly, and then all at once she broke out passionately. "Leave me! When I look at you I am tempted to forget my womanhood, and strike your false, smiling face. Oh, what had I done that you should have striven to drag me down in the mire of disgrace, to make me a byword and a reproach to my father. When I think of what (but for Eunice) I should now have been, I grow sick with hatred of you, and scorn of my own weakness and folly!"

"Have you done?" he asked, sullenly. "Well, hear me. Whether or no you believe me, I loved you only. I never gave a thought to your fortune, and I should not have accosted you now, only that I am anxious for tidings of my wife. She basely deserted me shortly after our marriage, but I am willing to forget and forgive the past if she will consent to return to me!"

"It is all false," Angela said. "Eunice has told me her story. You will not shake my faith in her, neither will I give you the power to molest her. She is safe and well provided for; she has influential friends. Believe me you would be wiser not to seek her out."

"I am the best judge of that, and I shall not leave Wintingham until I have found her, or if she is not here, until I have authentic news of her."

"She will be warned against you, and so take every precaution to escape you."

"I shall find her," confidently, "and you would be wiser to tell me all I wish to learn."

At this juncture footsteps were heard, and glancing hurriedly round Angela saw Clifford Hargrove. The young man lifted his hat coldly, and would have passed on; but Angela saw the scorn on his face, and she could not let him go, believing her guilty of a vulgar intrigue.

"Stay, Mr. Hargrove, if you please!" she cried, hurriedly. "This meeting is purely accidental on my part," and as he paused she joined him. "Will you help me to rid myself of this man's presence?"

"Has he been annoying you?" young Hargrove asked, turning threateningly towards the other.

"No, he has come down to find his wife!"

"And he intends to succeed!" laughed Rose; and with a mocking bow he turned on his heel, leaving the young couple in an embarrassed silence.

It was, of course, the woman who spoke first.

"Mr. Hargrove," she said, in a very low voice, "you do not believe I came out intending to meet Mr. Rose, or that I wished to exchange any further speech with him?"

"At first I did," frankly; "but your appeal to me dispelled my doubts. I can only ask you to forget that they ever existed."

"I could not complain, even if you thought so poorly of me," she answered, in a low, distressed tone. "I have behaved very badly to you, indeed. Oh! if you know how keenly I feel my humiliation, even you would pity me."

"I have done that all along; but take comfort, Miss Warren, the story of your flight is known only to three people—your father, Miss York, and myself. We are not likely to publish it."

"Oh, but that does not make me happier; I loathe myself; I am so ashamed that I hate to meet any familiar folks. I feel as if they all guess my secret and despise me. And now, through my wickedness, trouble is coming to Eunice. It will be such easy work to find her; and then, oh! then, what can we do for her?"

"Stand by her, and help her to fight her brute of a husband. I, for one, will render her all assistance in my power."

"Thank you, Mr. Hargrove. I want to warn her against him, but I am afraid to go to the Orphanage. He may be lurking about, and if he saw me would probably guess my errand. What am I to do? I owe her so much, I am so anxious to serve her, and yet I am at a loss how to do so!"

"I will walk home with you, if I may. That will give the fellow time to clear off. Then I

will go on to the Orphanage and see Miss York. It is necessary she should know the truth at once."

"You are most good to me," the girl said, gratefully, "and I cannot thank you as I ought."

"I have done nothing to deserve thanks; but if you think I have, and are anxious to repay me, do so by giving me your friendship. May I hope that you will?"

Impulsively, she stretched out her hand to him, the next moment regretting she had done so, for he took and held it fast, whilst he looked down into her blushing face.

"Angela," he said, unsteadily, "will you let me hope, too, that some day you will give me something more than friendship. Perhaps I ought not to speak yet; but your kindness has made me bold. If I am very patient, not harassing you with entreaties or plaguing you with attentions, cannot you in time learn to love me a little, if only because I love you so much?"

She was profoundly touched, and there were tears in the pretty violet eyes lifted to his.

"Mr. Hargrove," she said, "you cannot mean this after all my former coldness, after—after my recent escape!"

"But I do. There is only one woman in the world for me—you are that woman! Answer my question, dear. Will you bid me hope; or am I never to be anything but your casual friend?"

"I dare not say 'hope,' because all my heart seems dead within me, and all my power of loving gone. But will it not content you if I say of all my friends (save always Eunice) I like you best, esteem you most?"

"It does not content me, but I am grateful to you for your affection and esteem—only I shall never rest until I have your love—and that, please Heaven, I shall win at last!" And then he stooped his head and kissed the little hand he held, praying humbly in his heart that one day this girl would come to him of her own free will, never any more to leave him.

Gently she released her hand from him.

"Go to Eunice now. She may have need of you—Clifford," and with that she left him, and he went hastily towards the Orphanage.

But when his journey was half completed he met a friend who had long been absent from England, and stayed awhile to speak with him, and urge him to dine that evening quite en famille at Hargrove House.

And in the meantime the very thing Angela dreaded had occurred—Raymond Rose had met his unhappy wife.

She was walking with her girls when he saw her. She was very pale, save where upon one cheek there burned a crimson spot, and he knew that his hand had brought it there, but he felt no pity.

He hated her that she had spoiled his deeply-laid schemes, and not less for the scorn she had lavished upon him. She had been so different once, so gentle, so tender, so submissive to his will, and he refused to remember that he, and he alone, had changed and embittered that lovely and noble nature.

He allowed the scholars to pass before he emerged from his hiding-place behind a huge elm. Eunice was walking alone, and as he stepped before her she uttered a low, sharp cry; but before her charges had time to comment upon it, or be afraid, she had recovered herself, and was able to speak quite calmly.

"Go home, girls, and tell Mrs. Wade that important business detains me, but I shall return before dinner. Mr. Rose, you will please make your communications with all possible despatch. I have little time to spare."

Much as he hated her he could not fail to admire her courage as she stood waiting for him to speak, which he did as soon as the last skirl had fluttered round the bend of the road.

"So I have found you at last, my very affectionate spouse?"

She made no answer, but only drew a little further from him, with such scorn and defiance



in her steady eyes that he half shrank beneath their gaze. She gave no sign of fear, and he understood at last that this was no common character to deal with. He did not feel at all sure of victory now.

"You will get all your belongings together and return with me to town," he said at last. "Your rightful place is by my side."

"I shall never return," she answered, in level tones. "Your conduct has made that utterly impossible. Your journey here has been vain."

"I can compel you—"

But she interrupted swiftly:

"You dare not. I know too much of your past for you to attempt coercion. If only I were to speak, a hundred hands would be raised to slay you. To one woman you figured as the Polish patriot; to another—my most unhappy self—as the Russian exile; but I—I know you better now. You are a spy in the Russian service, and if you drag me down to your own vile level I will tell all that I know."

On her lips it was an empty threat, but he did not guess that, she looked so terribly in earnest; and his soul was shaken with a sudden fear, for death was full of horror to this man.

He sprang forward, and so near he was she felt his hot breath upon her face, but she did not shrink back. She was too utterly miserable to fear him; she despised him too intensely to ask mercy of him.

"Do you know?" he asked, hoarsely, "there is nothing to prevent me killing you? There is no one within sight or call, and discovery would be out of the question. Before night friends would have helped me out of the country—if such a thing had happened—if such a thing had happened! Be warned in time and come with me. You are penniless, I know, but you have beauty and talent, and can help me if you will, and as allies we must be successful."

The look she flashed upon him was more than sufficient answer, and it roused him to madness. Like a wild thing he sprang upon her. A moment something bright flashed in the keen spring air; the next there came a low, gurgling cry, then the sound of hasty steps, crushing grasses and twigs beneath them! And all alone, under the April sky, lay a dark figure, with its face pillowed upon the outstretched arms, and the life-blood oozing from a terrible wound in the side.

All around was silence. The very birds had ceased their songs, as though cognisant of that vile deed. The sky was overcast, and a few big raindrops plashed down on that rigid form—upon the sweet, white face, and heavy falling hair.

It was thus that Clifford Hargrove found her, and, with great horror tearing at his heart, he knelt beside her. Thank Heaven! she was not dead; he could still feel a faint pulsation as he pressed his hand upon her side.

Lifting her in his strong arms, he staggered on to the Orphanage, meeting no one; and his strength was all but spent when he came to the big gates. There he chanced upon a boy, whom he immediately despatched for a doctor, and then he bore his burden into the house.

Mrs. Wade uttered no cry, and quickly suppressed the loud lamentations of the girls, giving each some task to perform, whilst she ran hither and thither, doing all that she could to save Eunice's life. It was well she proved herself so capable and willing. In an incredibly short time Angela and her father arrived, and then the doctor.

"She will have a sharp struggle for life," said the latter. "Has any one any idea who was the assailant?"

With a swift glance at Angela, the Squire answered,

"No; it would probably be a tramp." To himself he said, "Heaven forgive the lie! But she would wish to screen him!"

#### CHAPTER VII.

Long days and weeks Eunice lay between life and death. There were moments when

those who loved and watched by her feared she would never wake to consciousness again, and great sympathy was felt for her throughout the county. The wildest speculations concerning her enemy, and the reason of his murderous assault, were rife; but those who possessed the secret held it inviolate. At length there came a day when the doctor bade Angela hope, and it was a bright one for the girl. It was soon followed by a brighter, when Eunice, the very ghost of herself, came downstairs, leaning on Mrs. Wade's arm.

The Squire, Angela, and Clifford held quite a little feast in honour of the occasion. It had grown a customary thing now for the young man to form one of the party, and Angela accepted his presence as a matter of course.

"My dear," said the Squire, bending over Eunice as she lay upon her couch, "I have a little plan to propose, which I hope will meet your approval. As it will be weeks before you are able to resume your duties, the trustees have decided to engage a substitute whilst you recruit your health and strength; and as Angela professes herself weary of Wintringham, I thought it would be nice if we all went down to Hastings together."

"But," began Eunice, when he stayed her peremptorily.

"No excuses, and let no pecuniary considerations affect your decision. I charge myself with all expenses. You seem to forget how heavy a debt I owe you, or else you are too proud to receive your due!"

"I am not proud—at least, not with you and Angela!"

"And you will join us? The change will be delightful!"

"You are too good to me!" she answered, unsteadily. "I do not know how to thank you, except by pleasing you!"

Angela was delighted, and the next morning began preparations for their flight, so that before the week-ended they were settled at Hastings, where Clifford promised to join them in a few days.

Away from Wintringham Eunice quickly recovered strength and tone. The light came back to her eyes, the faint, sweet smile to the perfect mouth.

"You are altogether another creature!" Angela said, regarding her with utmost satisfaction. "I shall love this place all my life for the good it has done you. See, papa, she is not nearly so shadowy as she was a week ago. Upon my word, Eunice, you are growing quite fat!"

And then she laughed and kissed her friend, and behaved in an altogether erratic fashion, until the Squire reminded her that Eunice was not yet strong enough to bear any excitement.

At the close of eight days Clifford appeared on the scene, and was closeted some considerable time with Mr. Warren. Then Angela was summoned.

"I scent a mystery!" she said, laughing, "and I hate anything that is not altogether clear; but it is a shame to make me share in their conspiracy," and she tripped smilingly away, leaving Eunice to her own thoughts.

It was not long before she reappeared, looking very subdued and somewhat pale.

"Dear!" she said, laying her hand upon the other's shoulder. "I have news for you!"

Eunice started.

"Of him? Has he found me again?"

"No, it is not that. Dear, prepare yourself for a great shock! You are free!"

"Free!" she echoed, under her breath. "You mean that he is dead!"

"My dear, yes. It happened yesterday. Eunice, you are faint!"

"No; let me be just a moment! There, see, I am ready to listen now! How did he die? and where?"

"The secret society of the Avenging Hand discovered he was not one of them, but a Russian spy, so the members drew lots to determine who should kill him. A young Russian was the one upon whom the task devolved.

He shot Raymond Rose yesterday in the open park. He fell dead without so much as a sigh or groan. Oh, Eunice! dear Eunice! do not break down! Surely you cannot weep for him?"

A strong shudder shook the slender frame from head to foot.

"I cannot grieve for him; but oh, Angela, what a dreadful end to such a life—not one moment for repentance or prayer—to die with all his sins upon his head. I cannot bear the thought. Remember, I loved him once. Oh!" dropping on her knees with clasped hands and streaming eyes, "may Heaven forgive you, Raymond, as now from my heart I do!" and awed by her manner, feeling instinctively, she desired to be alone. Angela went out, closing the door upon her. And there the newly-made widow knelt, praying earnestly for one who had done his best to break her heart and take away the life that had been so fair until he came to spoil and wreck it.

Again it was St. Valentine's Day, and Angela, with a bright blush on her radiant face, was engaged in untying the string which bound a dainty parcel directed in Clifford's well-known writing.

The Squire watched with interest whilst she removed the voluminous folds of soft white paper, until she disclosed to his view a beautifully chased bracelet, set with rubies; but it was not upon the gift that the girl's eyes rested, but upon the written words enclosed—just a brief quotation with one sentence of his own appended:

"I love you, sweet; how can you ever learn how much I love you?"

"If, indeed, you would make me happy, meet me at noon by the shrubbery gates.—CLIFFORD."

"Well, Angela, are you not satisfied with your valentine?" asked the Squire, with a quizzical smile. "You look—"

"Don't comment on my looks, sir!" she retorted, saucily. "It is not polite," and, gathering up her parcel and a pile of letters, she ran out of the room.

Should she go? Dared she accept the proffered love, she who was all unworthy of such a boon? Did she really love him as he desired and deserved? A bright blush stained her cheeks, and her head drooped low.

"I do love him," she whispered. "Oh! yes, with all my heart. How could I have ever dreamed he was not all in all to me?"

Later on she dressed with trembling hands, longing for, and yet dreading, the coming interview. She knew that by granting Clifford's request she was acknowledging her own passion, and a maiden's natural modesty made her shrink from doing this.

More than once upon her journey she retraced her steps, but at last, summoning her courage, she turned and fled towards the shrubbery, allowing herself no time to alter her decision.

And when she was a long way off, Clifford saw her, and went to meet her.

"What am I to understand?" he asked, in a low voice. "I do not think you would trifle with me. Does your presence mean that I may hope?"

Angela was so afraid of crying for sheer happiness that she dared only answer lightly, not looking at him.

"It means that I surrender at discretion."

"That this is my valentine?" he asked, passing an arm about her. "Is it so, sweetheart?" and then, they being alone, he drew her close, and passionately kissed the sweet lips, which now were not loth to respond to his caresses.

As Clifford insisted upon a speedy wedding, and there was really no reason why the young people should not settle at once, the preparations went on merrily. Only sometimes Angela would pause and look wistfully at her father, and once meeting her eyes he asked—

"What is it, little woman? Why do you regard me so pitifully?"

"I am thinking how lonely you will be when I am gone."

"Come here, Angela. Would it vex you very much if I were to follow in your steps?"

She started in surprise, then answered—

"I should be glad if I knew it was for your happiness, and that my new mamma was a very, very lovable woman. Do I know her, Papa?"

"Better than any other woman. It is Eunice."

"Oh!" with a breath of astonishment. "I never dreamed of such a thing; but I am more glad than I can say. Let me congratulate you."

"Don't be premature. I have not spoken yet, and she may refuse."

"If she does I'll never speak to her again," announced Angela, stoutly; "but she never can be so cruel. Oh, dad! what happy times we shall have together yet!"

"Eunice, I have a question to ask!"

"What is it, Mr. Warren?"

The Squire possessed himself of her slender, delicate hands, and all in a moment she knew what she had never before suspected, and stood silent and flushed before him.

"I am older than you, dear, but I am not incapable of love, and I love you very truly. Will you be my wife?"

"You cannot mean this—knowing my past?"

"I do mean it. It is my dearest wish to call you my wife!"

"But what of Angela?"

"She will be delighted. She has assured me of that."

"Mr. Warren," Eunice said, gravely, "no woman can love twice as I loved him; but I esteem you. I—I do not think any other man could fill the place you hold in my affection. If you are content to take me, knowing these things—"

"I am more than content, dear heart. Then you give this little hand to me?"

"If you wish it—yes."

So there were two weddings instead of one. And in her bright glad life Angela forgot the past, save at rare intervals; and although Eunice could not share that forgetfulness, her way lay in pleasant paths, and in her own sweet, grave way she was more than content. As for Squire Warren he blesses the day on which she gave herself into his keeping, and made his happiness her care!

[THE END.]

## RINGS.

A curious custom peculiar to the Isle of Man is that by which if a man offend an unmarried woman the Deemster gives her a rope, a sword, and a ring. She then has the choice of hanging him with the rope, beheading him with the sword, or marrying. The last procedure was the most common. It is recorded of the women of Prussia that during the war of 1813 they gave up their gold wedding-rings to the war fund, and in exchange the Government gave them iron rings. During the Commonwealth the use of the wedding-ring was for a time abolished owing to what was considered its heathenish origin and the puritan scruples against it. Posie rings of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have a quaintness of their own, although the love rhymes inscribed on them do not possess any great literary merit. The most common are: "God save thee, Most fit for me"; "Let us love, Like turtle-dove"; "Tis fit men should not be alone, Which made Tom to marry Joan."

## A STARE.

"It takes two persons to make a stare."

Oh, no, mistaken brother;

Just look at a cross-eyed girl with care—

Each eye stares at the other.

## Society

THE Riviera visit, which was never definitely settled, is now quite abandoned. His Majesty is overwhelmed with work in connection with his coming Coronation; and at the moment, too, is disinclined to take his well-earned holiday, as he has felt very keenly the recent disaster and the loss of life which has occurred in South Africa. It is now settled that he will cruise about off the South Coast in the new yacht during the Easter holidays.

THE Queen is very sad at leaving Marlborough House, to which she has grown so attached, and rather dreads the somewhat gloomy grandeur of Buckingham Palace. She takes great delight, however, in her new life at Windsor Castle, and she and the King will spend as much time as possible there in the summer.

THE King has commanded Mr. E. Abbey, R.A., to paint a picture of the Coronation at Westminster Abbey. His Majesty has expressed a wish that as far as possible the picture shall contain portraits of those present. The first Court is being painted by Mr. Hal Hurst.

It has frequently been stated that Princess Henry of Battenberg is shortly going to the South of France to spend a certain time with the Empress Eugénie at Cap Martin, and then visit her relations in Germany. There is no foundation at all for the statement. Princess Beatrice is about to move to the small house which she has taken in Kensington in order to see to the fitting up of her suite of rooms in Kensington Palace. She has consented to pay one or two short visits in the country, but otherwise she will stay in town till after the Coronation.

PRINCE ALEXANDER OF BATTENBERG has just been up for his examination for the Royal Navy, and has now gone back to Osborne Cottage, so that all the family are together, except Prince Maurice, who is at school at Hemel Hempstead, where he is getting on excellently, both in work and play.

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.'s decision to feast half-a-million of his poor subjects during Coronation week is a repetition of the magnificent hospitality of King Edward I. upon a like occasion. For fifteen days that monarch gave banquets to the rich and the poor, to princes, nobles and paupers. Tables were laid in many new halls built for the purpose, and attached to them were numerous kitchens, while additional leaden cauldrons were placed outside for cookery purposes. 300 barrels of wine were purchased for the occasions.

ONE of the most extraordinary gifts made on the Coronation Day of Edward I. was that of 500 horses, which had been used by the Royal princes and other personages in the procession to Westminster Abbey. These horses, all richly caparisoned and harnessed just as they were, were let loose into the very midst of the mob after the banquet in Westminster Hall that always succeeded a Coronation in those days. The people in the streets were permitted to catch the animals, and to him who caught a horse it and its appointments belonged.

NOR one of the Edwards was crowned with his Queen in Westminster Abbey, except the first King of that name, and it is furthermore remarkable that the Coronation of Edward I. and Queen Eleanor was the first that took place in the present Abbey of Westminster. King Edward II. was crowned alone, for he was not married at the time of his succession; the third Edward was a boy of fourteen when he was crowned; Edward IV. was unmarried at the time of his Coronation; Edward V., though he was born in the Abbot's house at Westminster, where his mother had fled for sanctuary, and was so nearly crowned that ever the wild fowl for the Coronation banquet had been ordered, was never actually crowned, and

Edward VI. was a boy of ten when the ceremony was performed. Hence from the auspicious occasion upon which the good Queen Eleanor went to Westminster Abbey with her husband until the present day no Edward has been crowned with his wife.

## Gems

THE requests we make of God interpret our character. They show us as we are. God reads our character in our prayers. What we love best, what we covet most, that gives the key to our hearts.

WHAT we most need to learn is this: That we may be laying up heavenly treasures of which nothing can deprive us, whilst we are laying up earthly treasures of which we cannot be sure for so much as an hour.

A MAN should not place happiness as the sole aim of his existence; he should strive to win honour and distinction, to benefit his fellow men, and, above all, to fulfil his duty, with no higher reward here below than his own approval.

THOUGH pity is represented in female garb, yet woman when she does strike, strikes harder, straighter, swifter, more unsparring than man. Perhaps she suffers as much as she inflicts, and this makes her ruthless, reckless—who knows? If so, she would rather die than acknowledge it.

LEARN to entwine with your prayers the small cares, trifling sorrows, the little wants of daily life. Whatever affects you—be it a changed look, an altered tone, an unkind word, a wrong, a wound, a demand you cannot meet, a sorrow you cannot disclose—turn it into prayer, and send it up to God. Disclosures you may not make to man you can make to the Lord. Men may be too little for your great matters; God is not too great for your small ones. Only give yourself to prayer, whatever be the occasion that calls for it.

## A WOMAN NEVER FORGETS—

To place her hand across her mouth when yawning.

To avoid contradicting flatly.

That when an apology is offered, courtesy demands that it be accepted.

That she is not privileged to lend a borrowed article without permission from the owner.

That it is in bad taste to discuss private or domestic affairs in the omnibus or tramcar. The vehicle is apt to be stopped suddenly, and her remarks fall upon ears for which they were not intended.

That the assistants in the shops receive salaries to be models of patience and to cater to her whims and fancies.

There is not a moment when someone, upon whom she desires to make a good impression, may not be observing her.

To gaze long into the plate-glass windows she is passing; not, however, at their contents, but at herself.

That it is a matter of course for "mere man" to give her his seat in the tramcar. He does not need to be thanked; an icy bow is sufficient.

## JUST LIVE THY LIFE.

Just live thy life in full content.

Do all thy best with what is sent;

Thou but receivest what was meant.

Just live thy life.

Just live thy life. Be not in fear.

The strength of wrong shall disappear,

And the right is ever drawing near.

Just live thy life.

Just live thy life. Seem what thou art;

Nor from simplicity depart,

And peace shall come upon thy heart.

Just live thy life.



## Gleanings

**THREE** are forty-eight different kinds of house-fly known and classified.

**SMALLEST ENGINE EVER MADE.**—The smallest engine ever made has been completed. It is a horizontal engine, and runs as accurately as the best engine ever built. It is made of gold, silver, copper, and steel, and covers a space about the size of a penny.

**A DOG NUISANCE.**—In Northern Patagonia a reward is offered for the extermination of the dogs that overrun that part of the world. The ancestors of these wild dogs were a pair of tame collies which were taken over by a Scotman straight from his native heath.

**MARRIED PERSONS LIVE LONGEST.**—According to Noirob, married women live on an average five years longer than maids, while married men live seven years longer than bachelors. "But," adds the statistician, "this state of things will improve—that is, the prolongation of life among married people will be further extended when our social conditions become more perfect, when man ceases to monopolise the right to natural selection."

**DISTINCTIONS WITH DIFFERENCES.**—In making the announcements to his congregation recently a minister said:—"Remember our Communion service next Sunday. The Lord is with us in the forenoon and the bishop in the evening." Here is another *lapsus lingue*, which had its origin in a Sunday school. The superintendent was making a fervid prayer, and asked Divine blessing upon each and every enterprise in which the school was interested. He closed his petition in the following words:—"And now, O Lord, bless the lambs of this fold and make them 'meet for the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen.'"

**LUNCH FOR A FARTHING.**—A satisfying breakfast in Dorset Street, Poplar, is made up of farthings-worths. Bill of fare: BLOATER, 4d.; MARGARINE, 4d.; BREAD, 4d.; COFFEE, 4d. Or for the bloater and margarine the hungry may substitute a farthing rasher and a farthing kipper. For dinner the plutocrat of Dorset Street may have three ounces of steak or chop, costing a half-penny, two potatoes at a farthing, and a farthing's-worth of bread. You can buy a farthing's-worth of coal; but for that you only get a pound of the worst quality of fuel, and the price works out at something like £2 per ton.

**A SCHOOL FOR DOGS.**—A school for dogs is the latest development of the educational movement. It has been established in Paris with the object of teaching—not letters, but politeness. The schoolroom is furnished with chairs, tables, and rugs to give the necessary "local colour" to the surroundings. The dog pupils are trained to welcome visitors by jumping up, wagging the tail, and giving a low bark. When the visitor leaves the dog accompanies him to the door and bows his farewell by bending his head to the floor. He is trained likewise to pick up a handkerchief, glove, or fan that has dropped and to return it to the owner. He is taught, further, to walk with "proud and prancing steps" when out with his mistress.

**"A BIT TOO STRONG" FOR THE DUKE.**—A good story is told concerning the Duke of Cambridge, who some years ago called upon a London photographer for the purpose of having his portrait taken. Rumour has it that the operator, instead of being swayed by such condescension on the part of a near relative of our late Queen, treated the old Duke with an air of familiarity which more surprised than piqued the ex-Commander-in-Chief. He quietly submitted to be posed, and obediently followed the instructions of the photographer until that individual, seeing the Duke was wearing his hat, quietly removed the headgear and, absent-mindedly, put it on his own head. This was too much for the aged Duke, who, jumping up from his seat, shouted: "This is coming it a bit too strong, sir," and walked out of the studio.

**MODERN SOCIETY.**—"What is your impression of modern society?" asked the old-time friend. "Well," was the answer, "I wouldn't like to have you mention it to mother or the girls; but my impression is that society is a place where a man who has worked his way up in the world from nothing to a millionaire is likely to get sneered at because he can't play ping-pong."

**QUEEN'S PETS.**—Many years ago, when Queen Alexandra visited Ireland, she received on landing the present of a white dove as an emblem of peace and goodwill. On her return to London she bought it a mate, and provided a home for it at Sandringham, where the pair raised a numerous progeny. The present inhabitants of the Queen's dove-house are direct descendants of the original pair; they are white, with eyes like pink coral.

**CORONATION CLAIMS.**—The Duke of Norfolk, as Earl Marshal, is receiving some extraordinary correspondence in connection with the Coronation. Some of the most audacious applications for seats for the Coronation service have come from members of the aristocracy. There is a story that the son of a peer begged to be let in as a lay figure in the choir. The son of a Duke, hearing of this, is said to have applied for the post of organ-blower for that occasion only.

**PING-PONG SCORING.**—To a correspondent who asks for "some instructions as to scoring in ping-pong," a contemporary replies as follows:—(1) Knocking the ball through the window counts three. (2) Breaking plate-glass mirror counts two. (3) Striking next player with racket takes eight off your score. (4) Lodging ball in ear of fussy old gentleman who is looking on counts six all around. (5) Hitting self under chin with handle of racket entitles you to another shot. (6) Knocking ball into opponent's eye is game.

**FENCING FOR WOMEN.**—There are growing signs that fencing is more and more becoming a pastime for women, and assuredly of all sports it is one which none can deary as unsuitable to the sex. Roman women were often skilled with the sword, and for promoting grace of carriage, quickness of eye and movement, and working all the muscles of the body, fencing is about the best exercise a woman can take. It is because it affords so much exercise that it is so much to be commended to girls and women who live in towns and have few means of getting the necessary amount of muscular work which all need if health is to be taken into consideration.

**LABOUR SAVING.**—The lifting magnet is an outgrowth of the toy that has been the delight of schoolboys for years—only instead of picking up needles, the commercial lifting magnet raises great plates of steel or bars of iron, carrying them from place to place. The lifting magnet makes it a simple matter to load a train with steel or to unload a cargo. The magnet is put into contact with the piece of material to be raised, an electric current is turned on, the lifting crane is set working, and the thing is done. One magnet will elevate a mass of metal aggregating two tons in weight. A single mechanic is usually in charge of the crane to which the magnets are attached.

**THE ROYAL STANDARD.**—The Royal Standard should not be ordinarily used at any celebration. It is the sole prerogative of Royalty to hoist this flag, but, splendid as it is, many people will be forgiven for electing to hoist this upon State occasions, especially as it is not forbidden by law. The three leopards of England are always on the upper corner, in the corresponding corner horizontally is the Scottish lion, while beneath the English leopards is the Irish harp, the fourth corner being again filled by the English leopards. Possibly in the near future this corner, in which the leopards may appear somewhat superfluous, may be occupied either by some device emblematical of British possessions over the sea, or the Welsh dragon.

**WHY JEWISH WOMEN MARRY.**—Jewish women dread the after life if they do not get married, believing that the prayers of husbands and male friends save them from having to suffer several years on a stone in the "dreadful place." A father's threat to his daughter is that he will not get her a husband.

**A CURIOUS GIFT.**—Two septuagenarians have just celebrated their golden wedding, and among their many presents was one from a monument and tombstone manufacturer, whose gift took the form of a handsomely-designed tombstone with the names of the couple engraved upon it. It will be set once erected upon a spot which the recipients of the gift have selected as their last resting-place. The old couple are said to be delighted with this unique present.

**THE HOME OF THE QUACK.**—It is strange to read that Berlin, the capital of the most scientific of Empires, is also among the headquarters of quackery. Some recent statistics show that there flourish by the side of some 3,000 qualified medical men no fewer than 476 professional quacks in Berlin. The fitness of these gentry for treating the diseases of the human form divine may be guessed at from the fact that of the male "healers" 20 per cent. had been servants or workmen, 40 per cent. artisans, and 16 per cent. tradesmen. Among 125 "lady healers" only one had enjoyed more than the most elementary education, while 58 per cent. were of the servant class, 24 per cent. shopgirls, 10 per cent. factory hands, and 4 per cent. sick nurses.

**THE BICYCLE MAID.**—In several of the large towns in America and on the Continent there are a number of girls making a good living by cleaning bicycles for members of the well-to-do class who do not enjoy the task and who dislike taking the necessary time and trouble involved in getting them to shops where such work is done. In addition to cleaning the machine, the bicycle maid makes it a part of her business to see that every screw and nut is in its place, and that handle-bars, saddles, etc., are in no danger of loosening unexpectedly. She charges just what the owner of the wheel would have to pay at the shops, but her customers say that she does her work more thoroughly, and that they prefer having it done at home, and so her orders are increasing steadily.

**THE IRON HORSESHOE.**—The iron horseshoe, permanently fixed to the hoof, was introduced in the fourth century of the Christian era. On the grassy plains of Asia, and on the open ground elsewhere, shoes were not needed; but the Romans soon found that their paved roads wore the hoof away, and often lamed an animal when his service was the most needed. They could devise no better remedy, however, than leathern soles and bags to protect the hoof, though there is reason to believe that they had an iron shoe which they put on and took off at pleasure. Some writers are of opinion that the later Romans had learned to nail the shoe under the hoof; but it seems probable that the crescent-shaped horseshoe of modern times was first invented in some part of the Eastern Empire, and that its form suggested its name, *Solea*, the moon.

**BEGGARS' FRAY DAY.**—One day in the year Constantinople is free from the beggar nuisance—on November 25. This is the festival of St. John the Almsgiver, the patron saint of the mendicant profession. No beggar of the Greek faith is on his or her beat that day. In the forenoon, all, or nearly all, orthodox mendicants attend a special service in the Church of St. Constantine, at which an archbishop officiates. The festivities are arranged by the beggars' corporation, for they are organised into a guild like any other trade. The church, spacious as it is, is often none too large for the numerous congregation of beggars, many of whom in their holiday garb look like respectable citizens. The rest of the day is spent in festivities, which extend so far into the night that many of the revellers are unable to attend to business on the morrow.

# LORD OF HER LOVE

BY EFFIE ADELAIDE ROWLANDS

Author of "Unseen Fires," "Woman Against Woman," etc., etc.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

**I**N the space of two minutes they stand thus. Sybil can almost feel the girl's spirit creep back into the slender frame again. She still keeps her fingers clenched close on Sadie's arm, and it is the firm grip that awakens the poor girl to the hideousness, the full horror of the blow that has fallen on her.

Sybil's heart is beating like a sledge-hammer in her breast. In all her wildest dreams she never pictured so great a triumph as this. It is not the moment to prevaricate, she must strike the final blow at once.

"Yes, Gerald Musgrave is here," and she bends closer to the pale, distraught face. "He is asking for his wife, Saditha!"

A quiver passes over Sadie's white lips, she is acutely, agonisingly awake to all Sybil's words; but she cannot utter one to save her life.

"You must let me help you," Sybil goes on quickly, "in this fearful moment. Turn to me as a friend, Sadie, I will not desert you!"

As a drowning wretch clutches at a straw so does poor Sadie grasp the offer of help, though how or in what way Miss Warner can aid her brain at this instant cannot realise.

"What can I do?" she murmurs, in low, distraught tones. "What can I do?"

"You must temporise. He cannot do much. Remember, he is a criminal fleeing from justice, but he is your husband for all that!"

A pang shoots through Sadie's heart that makes her quiver in every limb, to Sybil's intense satisfaction, "and he has a right to demand an account from you of all your actions!"

Sadie passes one cold hand over her brow, and Sybil goes on hurriedly.

"He has written a message to you through Lottie; will you hear it?" Miss Warner glances round half nervously as she speaks. Sadie makes no sign, but she does not wait for words. "He must see you to-night. He will not be denied. If you refuse this," Sybil's face is growing pale now, "then he will force himself in here, and before everyone, before Lord Ardean, he—"

"Oh! no, no! Oh! Heaven, not that!" breaks from Sadie's lips. "Anything but that. You are my friend, you promised to help me! You know all my miserable story, you will not let him do that! You will not—"

Sybil puts her treacherous, traitress arms about the girl's form.

"No, I will not let him do that. You must let me advise you, Sadie!"

"Yes, yes! I will do all you say!"

"Then send a written word to Gerald Musgrave at once, appoint a meeting-place this evening. Your husband—I mean Lord Ardean, will not return till late from Galtown. I am thankful, indeed, that I asked him to do those commissions for me!" this comes straight from Sybil's heart; it is rarely she utters so deep a truth. "You have, therefore, an excellent opportunity for being absent and keeping any appointment you may make!"

"To steal from the house like a thief!" Sadie murmurs, in tones of indescribable anguish and bitterness, burying her face in her hands. "Oh, Heaven, have mercy on me! I have been weak, I have been wrong; but the punishment is greater than I can bear!"

Sybil waits a moment impatiently.

"Well," she breaks in at last, "what will you do? Am I not right? Is it not

wiser to satisfy this man and prevent any scene of violence taking place here beneath Niel's roof?"

"Yes, yes, you are right!" the poor girl answers, lifting her ashen face from her hands. "I will see him to-night. It will give me some hours in which to prepare my darling for the awful shame, the horror that I must bring upon him. I must stop him from coming here, whatever happens—that must never be! It—it is all like some hideous nightmare! I thought my misery was all done—that I was free! Ah! may you never suffer as I have been made to suffer through this man. I will see him to-night for Niel's sake! for my darling's sake—but it will break my heart!"

"Come, that is very wise," Sybil says, briskly. Her eyes are shining like luminous stars, her cheeks are burning with a patch of red, awakened by the strong emotion within her, her hands are shaking with agitation.

At this moment it is she, and not Sadie, who is apparently suffering the most.

"We have not a moment to lose. See, here is pen and paper. Write a few lines. Lottie will convey them to their proper destination. Poor Lottie! she is so overwhelmed with grief for you; she can scarcely do anything now; little she thought when she came here that it was to meet a sister."

Sadie shivers at the word; but she lets Sybil lead her to the table and put a pen into her weak hand.

"Write as follows," Miss Warner commands, and, with quivering fingers, Sadie essays to obey. Twice she tries, twice she fails. While bending above her, Sybil Warner's face grows ghastly in its intensity, and she smothers a curse that will rise.

At last, by an extreme effort, Sadie forces her strength to return.

"Meet me," Sadie writes, at Sybil's dictation, "in the hut outside Knarlsborough grounds on the road to the right. I will be there at eight o'clock. I must see you—Sadie."

Were she less stunned by the magnitude of the horror that was fallen on her, Sadie must notice the extraordinary excitement that seems to pervade Miss Warner's actions. She would, too, have penned different words to the man who has come a second time to ruin her life. But her strength is so feeble; her mental agony so great, she notices nothing, she is capable of feeling nothing; but that a black shadow as of death has come upon her golden happiness, and that she stands on the edge of a chasm that is widening with hideous rapidity between her beloved and herself.

It is Sybil who blots the paper; Sybil who folds it.

"Now," she says, in strangely husky tones, "I will run and give this to Lottie; she must take it at once, and she will give him all instructions. You have done very wisely," she adds, just stopping an instant by Sadie's side. There is almost a smile of triumph on her face. "I do not think we need fear failure for our plan to-night."

And with that she goes swiftly from the room, leaving Sadie standing with her two hands pressed to her burning brows.

Left alone, the poor child gazes slowly from side to side in a dim, wretched way.

"What has happened?" she murmurs, vaguely. "I feel numb! Cold all over. So—so strange." She moves a few steps nearer the fire; the movement seems to awaken her; she utters a low cry. "Ah! I know all now. I remember. It is ended, my bright, beauti-

ful life is done. Oh! Niel, Niel, my love! my dear, dear love! Can you forgive me? I have ruined your happiness. I have brought shame on your proud head. I, whom you have done so much for. Why cannot I die now!" means the poor girl in her madness.

Then suddenly she hears voices, and she recoils that anyone seeing her now will be alarmed and surprised at her appearance.

With all her feeble strength she goes from the room, up the broad staircase, just as Philip Brewer and Lord Grafford enter the hall, and, with bated breath and wildly-beating heart, she gains her own room.

Her trembling hands can just turn the lock and then she falls—prostrate face downwards on the ground; not fainting, not mercifully insensible, but overwhelmed with the agony which has seized her heart; an agony which is so great that she prays that Heaven may have mercy and release her soul in death.

Sybil, when she leaves Sadie, rushes hurriedly upstairs and goes to Miss Musgrave's apartment.

"I have succeeded," she says, in tones of deep triumph.

Lottie is sitting crouched by the fire, and makes no reply to this exultant speech.

"Still weeping over spilt milk," Sybil sneers quietly. "Why, Lottie, you astonish me! What on earth is the matter?"

Lottie shudders.

"Can you ask? It's all very well for you, Sybil. Your path is clear; but think of mine! All my chance is gone. Have you forgotten that this Robert Cuthbert was Grafford's cousin, and that he was murdered by my—"

"Your brother! No, I have not forgotten it, seeing that I have just read a full account of the whole affair in that letter. But what has that got to do with your chances with Lord Grafford? Who is there to tell him that Jack Ronald and Gerald Musgrave were one and the same man? Come, you must not be a fool! It is not the time to waste moaning in this way. Besides, I shall want you to-night. You must help me!"

"What am I to do?" asks Lottie, sullenly.

"You must act to-night your very best. You shall not complain in the future, I can tell you. All you have to do is to keep Grafford amused and out of the way, while I—"

"While you—?" Lottie finishes in a questioning tone.

"While I go off to meet Lord Ardean, and then lead him to the hut outside Knarlsborough grounds, where he will have the pleasure of seeing his pure wife alone with a man, and that man her lover!"

"Suppose it should fail!" whispers Lottie. Sybil laughs.

"I am not so cowardly. I play for big stakes. I must be bold. Besides, how can it fail?—think of the circumstances—the hut—the time of night, Niel's jealousy, and her agitation—the silly fool will condemn herself."

Lottie looks dubious, and says nothing.

"Do you still doubt?" Sybil cries, impatiently. "Well; I don't care! To-night will prove how right I am, and give me the success for which I have planned—for which I have longed. Lottie, they say the devil helps his own; then, indeed, it must be some powerful spirit who has come to my aid to-day. Why should I have suddenly determined it would be wise to have Niel out of the way? Why should this letter have come to put such a new and strong weapon in my hand? Who knows?—the fates have smiled, that is enough for me!"

Lottie shudders once again.

"I wish to-night were over!" she says in a low, nervous way, and Sybil laughs again.

"You poor, puny, trembling creature," she says in tones of deepest disdain, "I pity you! As for me, I could shout with the fulness of my joy. I think, Lottie, my revenge is close at hand. He will kneel to me—he will turn to me in this hour of shame and misery. He will be mine again—mine; my own to love and hold for ever!"





THE CLOUDS THAT ONCE DARKENED SADIE'S LIFE ARE PAST FOR EVER.

And, throwing herself into a chair, Sybil gives herself up to her wild and blissful dreams.

Philip Brower does not accept Lord Graf-ford's invitation to go into the smoking-room when they enter the castle. He has had a long walk to a farm-house, not very near at hand, and he prefers to run up to his room and refresh himself by changing his clothes for dinner.

His man is busy arranging things when he enters. Philip is about to fling himself down in a chair when he catches sight of a note lying on the table. He opens it hurriedly, and his face grows grave.

"Who brought this, Simmonds?" he asks, turning to the man.

The valet looked surprised.

"I don't know, sir," he answers. "I saw it there when I came in, sir."

Philip stands and scans the few hurried, faintly-inscribed words—

Meet me in the hut outside Knarlsborough grounds on the road to the right. I will be there at eight o'clock. I must see you.

"SADIE."

"What does it mean; what has happened?" he asks himself anxiously. "Why meet her in the hut; why not in the house? Poor child, poor child! It is to escape from these devils, I expect. They have tormented her passing words while I have been away. She must be in great trouble or she would not have written to me like this. I must meet her, and yet I do not like doing it for fear that still greater and more terrible trouble may follow."

He reads the note again and again.

"How agitated she was when she wrote this," he muses. "I cannot refuse to go; it may be something now, something in which I can help her. I would not hesitate about it but Ardean's strange manner leads me to suppose that that fiend has made him jealous of me. Well, she has called upon me in her misery, and I cannot fail her."

He twists the note, and puts it into his pocket while he thinks over the situation with a cloudy brow. Suddenly the cloud goes; he gives a great start, almost utters a shout of joy, and exclaiming:

"The very thing; why on earth didn't I think of that before."

He kicks off his damp boots, hastily pulls another pair on, and having plunged his face into water, and hurriedly thrust his arms into a warm, heavy overcoat, he takes the opportunity of his valet's absence in the servant's hall to slip out of the room, down the stairs three at a time, and out into the darkness once again.

#### CHAPTER XXX.

When Sybil asked Niel to get her a list of things, all of which she would never need, she had been surprised just a little at the readiness with which he declared himself willing to start off at once to Galtown and fulfil her commission.

He had long intended riding there on important business connected with the estate, and he suddenly seemed to feel that a few hours' absence from Knarlsborough might do him more good than all the musing and thinking in the world.

It was a cold, miserable day, but as he rode away towards the town Niel drew a long breath of relief, and resolved that he would hold counsel with himself on the pain and growing disappointment that had lately come upon him.

His business in Galtown delayed him until dusk had set in, and remembering that he had left orders they were not to wait dinner for him, Lord Ardean turned into the one hotel and ordered some food.

All Sybil's commissions had been fulfilled, and just as Philip Brower is striding hastily out in the country lanes without a thought of fatigue, Niel is sitting alone in a room at the hotel staring into the fire, deep in his troubled reflections.

"How I hate myself for doubting her. My sweet love; my child wife," he thinks over and over again. "She cannot be so false; and yet why not? Have I not been deceived once before, why not again?"

His brow darkens, and he moves uneasily in his chair; then he starts to his feet and strides to and fro agitatedly.

"Bee was right," he breaks forth by-and-by.

"I should have closed my doors to Sybil Warner and her friends. My happiness has slowly vanished since that day. I have tried to believe her, to think she is sincere and true, but my heart recoils from her; there is something venomous about her. She is as far from my darling in sweetness and nobility as gold is from dross. Yet she seems to bewitch me at times." He brushes his hand across his eyes. "Her beauty is so wonderful, so very great."

A vision of two faces rises before him at this moment: a regal, seductive countenance, with its masses of auburn hair and steely grey eyes; and a pure, pale, sweet face, with lips like an angel's, and eyes like glorious stars, and his heart goes forth with a bound to this one.

"I am wrong—I am cruel! Why should I doubt her. Did she not tell me that summer night at Tidemouth that the man was dead. She does not lie; he must be dead, and I am wronging Philip Brower with my suspicions. If she only knew how many times during this past week my arms have longed to hold her, my lips to touch hers, she would not think me cruel and unforgiving. I will end it all to-night," he cries to himself, with a sudden determination. "I will go straight to Sadie and open my heart, show her all my love—my jealousy; tell her why I have grown so full of doubt, and then when she sees me at her feet she will confide in me. I shall learn the story of the past—that past that I feel was full of intense suffering and misery to her. If I had but listened to her that lovely summer night I should have spared myself, perhaps, all I have

endured this week. I was to blame. It was my fault. My poor, pretty love! Ah! Yes, I have been more than unkind to her. She is so young, so very young; a perfect child in years and mind. What may seem to have been strange about her of late has come perhaps from her innocence and ignorance. Well, I will end it all. Our happiness is too great to risk losing even a shred of it, and with perfect confidence it will return, and be as it has been since our wedding day."

Dinner is served at this moment, and with a mind refreshed by this resolve, and a heart full of eagerness to meet Sadie, Niel sits down and makes a good meal. His brow is unclouded, save when the thought of Sybil's presence at Knarlsborough flashes across his memory; and he looks a different man as he goes forth again, and mounting his horse, which has been well refreshed, he rides away into the darkness of the night.

Armed with a desire for a reconciliation and a complete return of that sweet confidence and companionship which he has craved for every day during the last week, and full of self-reproach and love, Niel will not let any suspicious arise to unsettle or distress him.

He will speak openly to Sadie, and thence forward doubt shall never come again. She shall tell him the reason of her depression, of her fainting fit, of her extraordinary intimacy with Philip Brewer. No longer will he permit himself to be tormented with vague hints or suggestions. He flings doubt to the winds, and will not be content until he has fathomed the mysterious barrier that has slowly and surely arisen between his darling and himself.

The night is very dark, and a thin, small rain is falling; but, cheerless as it is, Niel's heart is light within his breast.

He is riding at a good even pace towards the Castle, and is on the road which leads direct to it, when suddenly his horse swerves, rears, and with an exclamation of intense surprise Niel draws rein.

Something or someone is crouching down by side of the edge that lines the road.

"Who is there?" calls Niel, loudly; then, slipping from his saddle and holding the reins in his hand, he peers forward.

He sees a woman's form and hears deep, hurried breathing, as of some one in the greatest excitement and agitation.

"What is it?" he asks, hurriedly. "Did my horse hurt you? Is anything the matter?"

The woman rises from her crouching position, and half staggers back with a choked sob, and at this moment the heavy clouds break from over the pale, struggling moon, and Niel recognises in the pallid, agitated face a distorted likeness to the beautiful Sybil Warner.

"Miss Warner! Good Heavens!" he exclaims.

Sybil pretends to shrink back. "Lord Ardean," she murmurs in faint, low accents.

"You out here alone at this time! Surely!"—then Niel stops, the whole proceeding annoys and jars on him. "Pray let me conduct you back to the house as quickly as possible, Miss Warner," he adds, coldly.

"I—you—please do not notice me!" Sybil contrives to utter these words in a disjointed way which seems to arise from the deepest emotion. "I know this is strange; but—but I cannot explain now; some day I—"

She seems to be falling, and, hastily loosing his hold of the reins, Niel supports her in his arms; she is trembling all over.

"You are ill," Lord Ardean says kindly, yet still coldly; Niel has all an Englishman's horror of a scene, and there is something theatrical and unpleasant in this rencontre.

"Rest on me. I must think what is best to be done. Ah!" he starts with pleasure. "I forgot, we are close to the old hut where the timber is lodged. Can you walk so far; it can only be a few yards?"

Sybil gives a great shudder, then draws herself from his hold.

"No! no! not there! Oh, Heaven, not there!" Then, as if she were speaking to herself, she murmurs in a low yet clear voice, "The hut—I must keep him from the hut! He must not go there!—Niel must not go and see her there; it will break his heart!"

A cold perspiration breaks out on Niel's brow. These hurriedly-murmured words, uttered in this choked, wild way, have struck straight home.

"What is it you are saying?" he asks, deliberately, and in a concentrated voice. "What—what do you mean? Speak! Tell me all; I demand to know. I will go and see for myself." He takes a step forward; with a muffled cry Sybil flings herself before him.

"No! no! You must not—you shall not!" she is growing almost incoherent, "it will kill you! I—I—came to warn you, to prevent you! Alas! alas! I have failed! But you will not go, you must promise me. She is so young—she does not know—"

Niel clutches both her hands in a cold, iron grip.

"Tell me all," he says, in quiet, even tones. "Who is in that hut?"

Sybil waits; she can feel the strong, the awful agony he is enduring; then, in faint, low tones, she pants, rather than speaks, "Your—wife—and Philip Brewer!"

A shock, like an electric current, runs through every nerve in Niel's body; he does not loosen his hold.

"They are there alone! You have seen them yourself?"

"Yes," Sybil is fast losing her boldness; there is something awful, horrible in his quietness.

"Yes. I noticed something strange about dinner time; she did not eat. He was not there. I got nervous. I feared the worst. Afterwards I saw Sadie creep away, disguise herself in a cloak and steal out, then the thought came that she was going to meet him, and—and perhaps I might yet save her, I—I followed, weak as I am; no one saw me leave the house! I traced her to this hut. Philip Brewer was waiting outside, he took her hand, flung his arm around her, and led her in!" Sybil takes breath. "Then I thought of you! I remembered you must come home this way! I—I was nearly mad; I suppose all I wanted was to stop you, to warn you, to prevent you from learning this shame and sorrow, and now I have failed I could kill myself when I remember it—I who would give my life for you, Niel!"

Lord Ardean makes no sign as her voice dies away in a wail; but after a moment's silence he speaks.

"Come!" he says, and there is a tone in his voice Sybil cannot refuse to obey.

He takes her hand and leads her down the road. His horse is still standing as he was left. In utter silence Niel passes the hut, he does not even quiver or make any sign of the agony he is enduring.

About a hundred yards beyond he stops. "Now you can reach the house comfortably. I regret I cannot accompany you all the way. Please go at once, and allow me to suggest that you should remove those damp clothes, or you may suffer in consequence."

Sybil bites her lip, she had hoped to have seen the meeting between Sadie and her husband, but there is no gainsaying Niel in this mood.

With lingering, languid steps she moves away, and looks back now and then, only to see Niel standing gasping after her. When she comes to a dark corner all her languor vanishes, and, drawing her cloak well about her, Sybil runs fleetly through the grounds to the house.

Niel stands perfectly still for one moment as she vanishes, then he puts up his hand to his brow, and pushes off his hat, and then with set demeanour he turns and strides, not hurriedly or hastily, but evenly and deliberately, to the hut.

A faint light issues from between the chinks

of wood, and, with one bitter cry of despair and misery, Niel pushes open the door and strides in.

Just before him is Philip Brewer, holding a large ungainly lantern. He turns with a startled exclamation as Niel enters.

"Ardean!" he exclaims, in amazement and some dismay.

Niel's face gleams ghastly pale in the dim light. He moves forward.

"Ay, Ardean himself, you villain! You infernal villain!"

His hand that still grasps his riding whip is lifted in the air, when a cry rings out from the gloom of the background,—

"Niel! Niel, are you mad?"

With a hoarse cry that comes from his over-charged heart, Niel drops the whip and half staggers back.

"Bea!" he gasps. "Bea! you here?"

"Yes, I am here!" returns Mrs. Dalrymple, quietly. "And so is your wife; and we demand to know the meaning of your insult to Mr. Brewer, and your presence here!"

## CHAPTER XXXI. AND LAST.

Sybil Warner scarcely knows how she reaches the Castle after that meeting with Niel.

Her heart is so full of satisfaction and glad revenge she can hardly contain herself; but she does not intend to permit herself to give way to her triumph just yet. All is not over, although the game is so much in her hand.

She goes into the drawing-room, where Lottie, following her instructions, is entertaining Lord Grafton with some difficulty.

The fact that his mother is to arrive at Knarlsborough in a day or two comes as a reminder to the young man that he must be careful. And Lottie's heart is sick and weary when Sybil sweeps into the room.

She has made literally no progress; and, cold, worldly as she is, the memory of her brother's shame, of the heartbroken despair that came in her mother's letter when she told with what result her search had ended, comes upon Lottie like a dark cloud, from which she sees no escape.

"It is all very well for Sybil," she thinks bitterly, to herself; "things progress splendidly for her, but what for me? She does not think of me, and I can do nothing but remember Gerald—his hideous crime, his awful death. I wish, yes, I wish I were far enough from here. I am sick and weary!"

This expression is imprinted on her face when Sybil enters, but Miss Warner does not notice it; she is too full of her great success.

She sweeps up to the fire, looking wonderfully handsome; there is an eager thrill in her heart. What will Niel do? Will he kill them both? Her cheeks grow crimson at the thought. She is mad at this moment—mad with revenge and jealous love. The memory of Niel's white, set face fills her with no fear. She only laughs softly and cruelly to herself as she pictures poor Sadie's fear—her despair and helplessness.

"She is caught in a net and by her own doing. Fool!" she thinks, contemptuously.

She has not forgotten her rôle. Immediately on her return to the Castle, she went to her room, destroyed all trace of mud and wet, put some white powder on her face, and hid her strong right hand in the silken sling. She hardly knows what to expect. Will Niel come home alone? Will he bring his guilty wife back for one night? Or will he be fool enough to be won over by her fragile pretences? At this Sybil's brow clouds.

"Bah! no. He will never forgive her," she says, after a moment. "It was a clever move—a very clever move; and I have to thank Lottie's mother for it all. Who would have thought that the old w. Ann's journey to Paris would be productive of so much. I have always imagined Gerald Musgrave to be alive; but he is better dead. Such knives as he are not worth their salt. And what a chance it was that she discovered about this marriage."



A few scrawled words on a scrap of paper found in the dead man's hand, that was all! But enough, oh! yes, enough, for a smart detective, who goes down into the country and there discovers that our pure, lovely, angelic hostess is deep enough to conceal her former marriage and pose as a young, innocent thing!

Sybil is sitting gazing into the fire with a contemptuous smile on her lips as she thinks this:—

"No wonder she looks pale and sad. She is too poor a creature to carry a secret with her every day; and it is a secret, I am confident, or she would not have proved herself such a willing fool. Therein lies my strength, for even if Philip Brewer begins to explain the position, he must do so by betraying her. It is very evident he has known all about it, and that explains their intimacy."

Sybil's brow clouds at this. She is vile enough to wish that Sadie were, indeed, the dishonoured woman she has tried to make her. The girl's purity is a continual reproach to her.

"Lottie looks quite wretched," she muses on.

"The mention of the word murderer has scared her. Well, she must plan her own campaigns for the future. I shall have my hands full with my own." Then she grows restless. "What is happening?" she asks herself again and again as the clock slowly ticks the moments away.

"I cannot bear suspense—it always kills me. Surely something must happen directly!"

Even while she is thinking this she hears sounds of hasty footsteps and voices outside in the hall.

She turns ghastly white, and for one moment she feels sick and weak. Then, with a laugh at her folly, and a triumphant glance at Lottie, who is pale and nervous, she composes herself in her chair once more and waits.

Lord Grafford rises with a sigh of relief as he hears voices.

"I expect this is Ardean come home," he says, and he is going towards the door when it is suddenly opened, and Niel enters, leading, or rather supporting, Sadie with his arm.

Sybil's teeth meet in her firm lips, and she becomes ashen white as her eyes meet Niel's, and then go beyond him, and rest on Bee's small figure.

There is a moment's silence—a silence pregnant with meaning to all but Lord Grafford, who unconsciously comes to the rescue.

"Mrs. Dalrymple! Why, I am surprised. I mean I—didn't know. I—"

"Yes, I thought my presence here would be a surprise, but I felt Sadie needed me, and so I have come back," Bee says very distinctly. Then, turning to Niel, who has put Sadie into a chair, and is tending her most carefully:

"Niel, I think you wish to speak to Miss Warner. Shall we not leave you together?"

"No, stay!" Niel commands rather than speaks. "What I have to say to Miss Warner can be said openly and before you all."

Sybil has risen, and is standing drawn to her full height.

In one instant her triumph has been turned to disaster, and the castle she has reared so revengefully lies in crumbled ashes at her feet. She looks ghastly with the green pallor that has come upon her, and in her eyes a livid light is burning.

Lottie has shrunk into the background, and is cowering out of sight.

Niel moves a few steps nearer Sybil, but he still keeps hold of Sadie's hand.

"Sybil Warner, you should go down on your knees," he says slowly and sternly, "down on your knees, and thank God that you have been spared the guilt of shed blood on your head this night. Woman! do you think of what you have tried to do? What has this child ever done to you? Who wronged you that you should plot against her so horribly? I see now how blind I have been. I should have listened to the voice of wisdom, and against all feelings of hospitality and mistaken gratitude should have shut my doors to

one who is nothing but a viper—a fiend in woman form. When I think that I have permitted you to be near my pure wife—"

"Pure wife! The widow of a convicted murderer, a treacherous, deceitful girl who has—"

Sybil hisses between her pale lips.

"Silence!" thunders Niel. "You do not know her. You cannot judge her. God grant you may never have the suffering she has endured. My wife is as pure as Heaven's angels, and it is when I remember that I have allowed you to live in the same house with her that I could overwhelm myself with sorrow and disgust." He brushes his hot eyes with his free hand. Lord Grafford looks bewildered, Lottie still cowers behind; but Philip and Bee stand upright, and their faces are eloquent with their emotion.

Sybil breaks in on the pause that follows.

"So much for human gratitude," she sneers.

"I save that creature's life and risk my own, and yet—"

"It is false," breaks in Bee quickly. "I have a witness who can prove he saw you lurking behind the hedge, and purposely cause Sadie's horse to swerve to suit your own wicked machinations."

Sybil laughs shortly.

"Fools!" she says, curtly, "to have been blinded so long!"

"I was never blinded," Bee replies. "I knew you at your true worth from the first!"

"If we have been blind and have deemed you worthy of our esteem, even our affection, we are so no longer." Niel is speaking very quietly.

"Miss Warner, the farce is ended; a carriage waits at the door to convey you to the inn at Galtown, where you will be accommodated with apartments at my expense until to-morrow. Your belongings shall be forwarded early in the morning. Will you be so good as to attire yourself without delay, both yourself and your friend, Miss Musgrave!"

"So," Sybil pants, staggering back at his manner, "you actually turn me out of doors! Take care, Lord Ardean, take care. Best make a friend of me. I can be a nasty foe!"

"What can you do?" Niel asks contemptuously. "Go, I am not afraid of you."

"I can blazon to the world the story of her shame. I can point the finger of scorn at your wife, who—"

Sybil has drawn near to him, and loosing his hold of Sadie, who is sitting pale and weak, almost unconscious of all that is passing round her, Niel advances and grips Sybil's arm.

"Silence!" he says, in stern, deep tones.

"Dare to utter such words, and I will have you flung out, woman as you are. Go! Do your worst, it cannot harm my darling, for by to-morrow the story of her wrong shall be published to the world; all shall know how she has been tried and how she has conquered. Go, then, and do your worst. I do not fear you, I despise you!"

The love that is burning in Sybil's breast falters at his contempt; and a low cry escapes her lips.

"Oh, heaven!" she moans, "and I love you! I love you!"

Niel shrunk back.

"Let us end this," he says, trying to hide his disgust. "Your mission is finished here, Miss Warner. It is time you went!"

Sybil gives him one long, eager look, and at the undisguised contempt in his eyes her craven courage revives.

"So be it," she laughs. "I go; but look to yourself, my Lady Ardean; it is to you I owe this, and on you I will be revenged!"

She stands upright, gives one look round, and then goes fleetly from the room and from Sadie's life.

Niel goes to Lottie, who is bending forward, her face in her hands, and touches her gently on the shoulder.

"I am going," she mutters, faintly, "and—I am sorry. I have had so much horror to-day, I think my heart is broken."

She moves forward with faltering steps, and

when she reaches Sadie she suddenly kneels on the ground.

"Forgive me," she pleads, in low accents. "Forgive me."

And Sadie, with tears in her eyes, bends forward and kisses her on the brow. The agitation, the excitement, is too much for her. She has grown so weak in her mental agony of to-day that she can bear no more, and as Philip courteously lifts Lottie from her knees and leads her to the door, Sadie falls back, white and unconscious, in her chair.

When she comes to herself, she is lying in her bedroom with Niel bending over her.

"My darling!" he murmurs. "Oh! thank Heaven! Thank Heaven!"

Sadie smiles faintly, then gradually all the horror returns to her, and she gives a low cry.

Niel grasps her two hands and kisses them, and at the touch she looks up.

"You—you have forgiven me?" she asks.

"My darling," he answers, tenderly, "it is I who should ask that. I who have wronged you, my own pure love. If I had listened to you that bygone night at Tidemouth this would never have happened!"

"But I should have been braver, Niel," Sadie murmurs.

"And I more just," he returns, with a smile.

Then he bands his head and kisses her, not once, but many times, holding her in his arms as he would a baby.

"It has been a cruel, an awful time; but it is over now, thank Heaven!" he says. "Oh! Sadie, you can never know what joy it was to me to see Bee with you to-night."

"I can never hope to repay her for all she has done. How sweet she was, Niel, when she told you all about the past, and I know it was painful to her, for she had only just learnt it from Mr. Brewer."

Sadie rests content in his arms for a moment, then says, with a fading colour—

"And—and they are gone!"

"Yes, gone for ever. By Heaven's will you shall never see them again, my darling."

"I was sorry for Miss Musgrave, for she seemed truly wretched," Sadie says, slowly.

Niel is silent for an instant.

"It is meet that she should kneel to you, Sadie, my darling. I will tell you why. Her father was the murderer of your parents' lives. No, he did not shed their blood; he did as that fiend tried to do to us to-day. Think, my dearest heart—of a girl so lovely as you are; of a man as noble, as proud, as handsome as your father must have been. You see, I know the story. I exercised my rights as your husband and guardian to master it only a day ago. It is a short one; but, oh, so sad, Sadie! Your father was some years older than your mother; but they loved with no common love, and when you were born their happiness seemed complete.

"But a shadow was to fall upon their lives. Your father had a great friend, a Richard Musgrave, to whom he was ever kind and generous. It was from the hand of this man the blow came. He loved your mother, Sadie, and when he pressed his dishonourable suit and found that she held nothing but contempt and disgust for him, he played the part of Iago. Fearful lest Lady Derwent should betray him to her husband, he concocted a vile plot, by which your poor father was, alas! made to believe his wife unfaithful to him and to the honour of his name.

"Let me hold you tight, Sadie! I grow cold when I think of the danger we have just escaped. It was in going after your mother in her supposed flight, which was only a visit to a convent in Italy, where she had been educated, that Sir Reginald met with the awful accident that made him the cripple you saw him. Sadie, he never saw his wife again.

"Maddened with jealousy and shame, he wrote her a letter, overwhelming her with reproaches, stating he would never willingly

meet her; and, taking you from her charge, he developed into a profound misanthrope, without a wish or hope in life until a few years later, when your mother's last dying words were conveyed to him, and Richard Musgrave's treachery was discovered.

"Sadie, I will not dwell on the condition of your poor father at this time. You can guess how fearful his mental agony must have been! From then, he had only one motive—*revenge*! He hunted down Richard Musgrave and his family, and there is no question of doubt in my mind that he sent for you with his failing strength to imprint the seeds of his hatred in your young breast!"

"And yet fate was too strong, and I married the very man in all the world he held in such abhorrence!" Sadie whispers, mournfully, the tears are rolling down her cheeks, brought by the recital of her parents' wrongs.

Niel kisses her softly.

"Darling," he says, "I have told you this story to-night, because, from henceforth, I shall bar all mention of the past. It is done. It is buried. We will never recall it. Let it be a compact, Sadie, between you and me, that after this week, we will never even think of the past and all its sorrows. There is only one more trouble for you to meet, my darling!"

Sadie looks at him eagerly, fearfully.

"You must marry me again, my sweet!" he says, gently kissing her lips. "Our marriage is not legal as it stands, for your name must be inscribed as Gerald Musgrave's widow, not simple Saditha Derwent, as it was."

Sadie hides her face on his breast.

"Oh, my darling!" she whispers, "how good, how noble you are. You do not reproach me. You give me nothing but tenderness in all this trouble and disaster."

"Because," Niel answers, lightly, drawing her to his arms very close, "because, strange as it may seem to you, my lady, I love you—and shall love you till I die."

The years roll away. Six winters have come and gone since that memorable night at Knarlsborough Castle, and three small forms, with phenomenally large lungs inhabit a suite of rooms in the majestic old building. They are right handsome children, and their greatest happiness is a romp with mother in the large hall.

"You spoil those brats, Sadie," Bee Brewer declares, as she comes upon them deep in hunting the slipper, one lovely spring day. She carries a tiny gold-haired mite on her shoulders as she speaks, and Sadie—grown into a lovely woman—all the more beautiful for the touch time has given to her face and form, laughs heartily.

"And you will never spoil yours, I suppose, Miss Bee. Ah! here comes Niel. Run babies, and meet papa!"

The children are kissed and played with, and Niel has a free moment for his wife.

"You look thoughtful, Niel. Has anything happened?" Sadie asks.

"I heard to-day of that wretched woman, Sybil Douglas' death. She has finished her life most miserably. Her marriage with that man dragged her down even lower than she was. It was Lottie Musgrave who was with her at the last, and who nursed her with all the tenderness of a sister. She, at all events, has done well in the past; it is pleasant to remember that."

"We must be kind to her, Niel!" Sadie says gently. She has grown pale as she hears of Sybil Warner's death.

"You shall do just as you like, my darling, in the matter!"

Bee has raced down the passage with her baby on her back to meet her husband, who is emerging from the library, where he has been busy correcting proofs of a novel that is being eagerly anticipated by all the literary world.

For Philip has now fame and fortune, and he calls himself the luckiest man in the world.

"Sadie," Niel murmurs, as they are alone together, "why is it that you do not get tired of me, a stupid old fogey like me, and a lovely—"

"Hush!" she says, putting her hand on his lips. "My darling, you are my king—my hero. There is no one so good as you are—no one so true and tender. You are more than my husband—you are lord of my life!"

[THE END.]

#### WEATHER LORE.

There is no doubt that weather lore as it was known to our fathers is fast passing away. Still, for many it has attractions, and there are few things more interesting than a collection of the old sayings that have been believed for generations. Thunder on Sunday is considered by the weather-wise the sign of the death of a great man; on Monday, the death of a woman; on Tuesday, if in early summer, it foretells an abundance of grain; on Wednesday, warfare is threatened; on Thursday, the farmer may reckon on an abundance of sheep and corn; on Friday, some great man will be murdered; on Saturday, a general pestilence must be expected. Friday's weather shows what may be expected on the following Sunday; that is, if it rains on Friday noon, then it will rain on Sunday, but if Friday be clear, then Sunday will be fine as well. The twelve days immediately following Christmas denote the weather for the coming twelve months, one day for a month. The day of the month the first snowstorm appears indicates the number of snowstorms the winter will bring. For example, if the first snowstorm comes on November 29, there will be twenty-nine snowstorms during that winter. A gale moderating at sunset will increase before midnight, but if it moderates after midnight the weather will improve. "No weather is ill. If the wind is still." If the full moon shall rise red, expect wind. The sharper the blast the sooner it is past. A light yellow at sunset presages wind. When you see northern lights you may expect cold weather. Hazy weather is thought to prognosticate frost in winter, snow in spring, fair weather in summer, and rain in autumn. Storms that clear in the night will be followed by a rainstorm. Three foggy mornings will surely be followed by a rainstorm. When the leaves of trees show their under side there will be rain. When the perfume of flowers or the odour of fruit is unusually noticed rain may be expected. If a cat washes herself calmly and smoothly the weather will be fair. If she washes "against the grain" there will be rain. If she lies with her back to the fire there will be a squall. Cats with their tails up and hair apparently electrified indicate approaching wind. If pigs are restless there will be windy weather; pigs, it is said, can see the wind. Magpies flying three or four together and uttering harsh cries predict windy weather. When the owl nests, look out for a storm. When the swallow flies low rain will come soon; when it flies high expect fine weather. If the cock crows at night he will "get up with a wet head."

#### UNWASTED DAYS.

The longer on this earth we live

And weigh the various qualities of men,

Seeing how most are fugitive!

Of fitful gifts at best, are now and then—

Wind-wavered corpses lights, daughters of the fen—

The more we feel the high, stern-featured beauty

Of plain devotedness to duty,

Steadfast and still, nor paid with mortal praise,

But finding amplest recompense

For life's ungarlanded expense

In work done squarely and unwasted days.

J. R. L.

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From such a desperate act she is saved by a stranger, who at the same time proffers his assistance.

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This is a Romance of sustained energy, and it will be found that the plot, so lightly sketched, is developed with

### REMARKABLE SKILL and POWER.

Numerous surprises are introduced, forcing the reader to hasten from chapter to chapter with entranced delight.

The First Instalment will appear

**NEXT WEEK**



## THE GOLDEN HOPE

### SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

Lady Redwoode, the owner and undisputed proprietor of all the fair domain of Redwoode, has been at a widow a year or more previous to the opening of the story. Lord Redwoode left no heir, but expressed wish that on the decease of his wife the estates should pass to their nephew, Andrew Forsythe, and never doubted Lady Redwoode's compliance with his wishes. Mr. Forsythe was musing over many things, and wondering what would happen to him should his aunt marry again. Judge then of his surprise when Lady Redwoode tells him the story of her early life. Secretly married when quite a girl, in order not to arouse the anger of her brother, with whom she was living in India, there came a day when it was necessary to tell all, and the scene that followed caused Lady Redwoode to fall into convulsions, and she lay ill for many weeks. On returning to life and consciousness, it was to find herself a widow and a mother.

Sir Richard Haughton, although but twenty-seven, has lost all joy in life through an unhappy marriage. News is brought to him that his divorced wife, Margaret Sorel, is dying, and the messenger eagerly begins an interview on the pretext that Margaret desires Sir Richard's forgiveness. Margaret fails to rekindle the old love, and swears that no other woman shall ever become his wife.

Now Lady Redwoode's brother is dead, and as an act of reparation has sent all the necessary proofs of her first marriage, but the secret of the identity of her own child dies with him. The two girls are coming to England, and it is for Lady Redwoode to discover which of the two is her daughter. After a little hesitation in coming to so momentous a decision, the choice falls on Cecile, who at once sets to work to ingratiate herself with Lady Redwoode at the expense of her foster-sister Hellice, and in this she is ably seconded by the Hindoo ayah. Cecile's relationship is proclaimed to the assembled household; and to Hellice, who watches this rejoicing without one pang of envy, there suddenly comes a feeling of loneliness, and she turns unobserved into the garden to seek comfort among the shade of the trees. It is thus that she discovers Sir Richard Haughton, who for one moment gazes on the lovely vision ere it is lost to view. "I must see her again," he says, "Whoever and whatever she is I recognize her as my fate."

### CHAPTER XXXV.

There was a strange and sinister look on the visage of Andrew Forsythe as he entered the chamber of his young bride; an evil and significant meaning in his bearing and a scheming expression in his eyes that showed plainly that all the wickedness in his nature was active and self-assertive at that moment. Cecile raised her gaze to his countenance with a fleeting blush on her cheeks, but her face grew strangely white and her manner agitated, as she instinctively comprehended that a crisis in her destiny was at hand, and that her bridegroom had sought her, not to whisper sweet nothings in her ear, but to consult with her upon the best means by which to avert a threatening and deadly peril.

She sat down, with a sudden feeling of faintness. Mr. Forsythe approached her with long and rapid strides, and seated himself in an arm chair close beside her.

"Dismiss your woman, Cecile," he said, abruptly. "I wish to talk with you."

Cecile turned to her ayah with a gesture of dismissal, but the Hindoo hesitated to obey it. She comprehended from Mr. Forsythe's manner that he was greatly disturbed in mind and soul, and she desired to be admitted into his counsels. She bent forward, with a pleading expression on her berry-brown face; but, before she could say a word, Cecile repeated her gesture impatiently and imperiously that nothing remained but simple obedience. Tossing her head angrily, therefore, until her long earrings tinkled like bells, she went into the adjoining chamber, and closed the door loudly behind her.

"Well, what is it?" cried Cecile, anxiously, when she found herself alone with her husband. "What has happened?"

Mr. Forsythe seemed in no hurry to reply. He permitted his gaze to wander over the luxurious adornings of the boudoir, but evidently as one who looks and sees not, and then recalled it by a visible effort to the white-robed, white-veiled figure, close beside him.

"Why don't you answer?" demanded Cecile, with increasing impatience. "Is Mr. Anchester a traitor to us? Is he in mamma's room at this moment?"

"You have guessed, then, the danger that threatens us?" said Mr. Forsythe. "Mr. Anchester is not with Lady Redwoode, but her ladyship suspects that he knew you in India, and that he has some hold upon you. She even imagines that he may have become possessed of the secret of your parentage. She told me this morning that she should question him, bribe him—!"

"Oh, what shall we do?" interrupted Cecile, in sharp tones of despair. "Mr. Anchester would sell his soul for money. His old love for me has turned into hatred, and he would give much to revenge himself upon me!"

"I knew all this, Cecile, and I have met the peril by sending Mr. Anchester away. I pretended that you and I were going off somewhere on a bridal tour. He is gone already, and will not return in less than a month!"

Cecile clasped her hands in an ecstasy of joy, and a look of intense relief passed over her features.

"A month's respite!" she ejaculated. "What can we not do in a month?"

"You see, then, that we must do something! Our position is perfectly insecure, Cecile. Our prosperity depends entirely upon a man who once loved you, but who now hates you with a bitter revengefulness. He would like to humble us, to cast us forth upon the world penniless and helpless, and I know that he has made within his own soul a vow to accomplish our humiliation and degradation!"

Cecile uttered a cry of terror and alarm, and wrung her hands helplessly.

"We must outwit him," said Mr. Forsythe, quickly and determinedly. "We must work together and at once. You proved yourself clever enough in that poisoning affair, and you must assist me by even subtler schemes now. You do not half comprehend our peril, Cecile. When Mr. Anchester went away he flung back at me a look of cunning and triumph, that enlightened me considerably as to his plans. He is no blunderer, but an enemy as clever as ourselves, and we can only outwit him by acting unitedly and promptly."

"What do you suppose his plans are?" asked Cecile. "He does not know that Lady Redwoode suspects him, or wishes to bribe him!"

"Can you not see his plans? He left Redwoode on the morning of the day that Hellice disappeared from Holly Bank. I was struck by the coincidence, made some inquiries, and discovered that he went to North Eldon!"

"Well!" said Cecile, in a hollow whisper, and with staring eyes.

"Do you not yet comprehend? He went to Holly Bank, saw Hellice, and ingratiated himself into her confidence on the strength of their acquaintance in India. He learned from her of the accusations against her, and offered her his friendship and consolation. Hellice has an ardent, tropical nature, and very probably she turned to him as to a brother. His next step was to offer her a home, and she of course accepted the offer. He was gone from Redwoode three or four days, and during that time he found Hellice a safe and secure refuge. I noticed that he had a strangely self-satisfied expression whenever the girl's disappearance was mentioned. He went away very willingly this morning. He did not go to Lord Anchester's, for he had worn out his welcome there. He did not go to visit a friend, for he has no friends in England. He went to Hellice!"

"And he will bring her back to Redwoode?" cried Cecile.

"Yes, as his wife!"

The astute reasoner spoke these words as if he had been firing a bombshell, and Cecile listened to them as she would have listened

to the unexpected bursting of a bomb—pallid, stunned, and terribly frightened.

"When Mr. Anchester brings Hellice here as his bride," said Mr. Forsythe, "your star and mine must set for ever. She will tell the truth about the poisoning affair, and we shall be dismissed from Redwoode!"

"But Hellice won't marry Mr. Anchester," said Cecile, with a desperate clinging to the last straw of hope. "She loves Sir Richard Haughton—"

Mr. Forsythe smiled sardonically.

"Women don't always marry whom they love!" he said. "Mr. Anchester finds Hellice alone, friendless, unprotected. He plays the friend and lover. He tells falsehoods about Sir Richard Haughton, of course. He promises her wealth, grandeur, and love. The girl was bewitched about Lady Redwoode, and Mr. Anchester may promise to secure her recognition as Lady Redwoode's daughter. It is all very simple. No constancy can stand such assaults under such circumstances. Hellice went away in disgrace. In a single week more she may return in triumph!"

"Why don't you follow Mr. Anchester, and get Hellice into your power?" cried Cecile, desperately. "We could shut her up somewhere, or—"

A significant silence completed the sentence better than words could have done.

"Mr. Anchester has doubtless prepared against such a step on my part. He is as keen as a detective, as suspicious as an escaped convict, and as guarded as a conspirator. He would lead me long wild goose chases on false scents, while he was laying siege to Hellice's heart, and laughing in his sleeve at me. It is out of the question for me to pursue Hellice. Our true course lies in working a vein nearer home!"

"You mean by putting it out of Lady Redwoode's power to welcome Hellice when she returns!" answered Cecile, readily catching at Mr. Forsythe's idea. "Yes," she added, slowly, "that is our only course. It will be a difficult task, for Mr. Kenneth is as sharp-eyed as a ferret. He watches me too closely now!"

"We must go away from Redwoode. There are too many here to watch over her ladyship," said Mr. Forsythe, hoarsely, his face flushing and paling alternately under the ebb and flow of his emotions. "I have thought out a plan, Cecile, and you must give me your co-operation. We will go somewhere on a bridal tour, and Lady Redwoode shall accompany us. We will stop in some lonely and retired spot—and when we leave it our position will be assured beyond all cavil!"

There was a deep, hidden, and deadly meaning in his tones that betrayed itself to Cecile, but she did not shrink from him in horror and affright. His desperate look reflected itself in her face. She felt like him, that everything she held dear was at stake, and that she would scruple at nothing to attain wealth and position.

"But where to find the lonely house?" she said, in a whisper that even startled herself.

Mr. Forsythe, by way of reply, drew from his pocket a morning paper, and singled out from its advertisements one which he read aloud. It was as follows:—

"To let—in a very retired part of the eastern coast, an old-fashioned dwelling-house. Would be an admirable situation for a family desiring extreme seclusion. Or would be let as a private asylum of any sort, for which purpose the place is well adapted.—Address, Mr. Thomas Sorel, on the premises."

Then followed the address.

The place in question was that inherited by Margaret Sorel, but Mr. Forsythe did not even remark the coincidence of names.

"We will spend our honeymoon in that place," he said, refolding the paper and restoring it to his pocket. "I will write a letter to-day to this Sorel, preparing him for our coming. We must follow up our letter to-morrow."

It is for you to persuade Lady Redwoode that a change of air will do her health good, and induce her to accompany us. Do you think you can accomplish the task?"

Cecile assented, adding: "Renee must go with us. I cannot do without her, and we shall find her invaluable in our care of Lady Redwoode."

Mr. Forsythe made no objection to this addition to the bridal party. He knew that his bride would need the services of a maid, and congratulated himself that one so subservient to their wishes would accompany them. In his own heart he had begun to cherish schemes against the widow of his late uncle, daring and terrible schemes, from the execution of which his cowardly soul shrank in terror. In the unscrupulous Hindoo he would possess a ready and willing instrument to carry out his designs. Renee's old hatred for the baroness, her worshipping love for Cecile, her love of luxury and power, her aversion to Hellice, all conspired to make her a most efficient coadjutor, and he knew well that his darkest plotting would find in her a sympathizing friend.

So it was settled that Renee was also to go. We will not dwell upon the interview between the newly-wedded couple. It was hideous with ingratitude, wicked cunning, base scheming; and, had not so much been at stake, the two plotters must have shrunk from each other in bitter loathing. Cecile proved herself a very serpent in guise, and Mr. Forsythe wondered at her familiarity with thoughts of crime, until he reflected that she had been all her life long under the tutelage of her ayah, the most guileful of her race. Their plans were developed, their future mapped out clearly and comprehensively, and at last their spirits rose, hope came back, and they dared to dream of a time when they should succeed to the domain of Redwoode without any fear of molestation.

While they talked, Renee listened at the door, with at times audible chuckles and exclamations of delight. The play of evil passions was sport to her. She clutched her basket of deadly drugs instinctively, and now and then muttered vengeful words in her native tongue, as if she felt herself triumphing over personal enemies.

At length, unable to restrain herself longer, she came out, and startled the two plotters by exclamations of approval.

"I have heard all," she said. "You had better have taken Renee into your confidence at first, but, never mind, I will help you all the same. Your brain, Mr. Forsythe, is not subtle enough for true cunning. Take me into your counsels, make me your friend and confidant, and I will bear the burden of your guilt."

She showed her white teeth, so like the pointed fangs of a beast of prey, and smiled as, in obedience to Cecile's desire, Mr. Forsythe granted her request.

"Be faithful to us, and you shall be well rewarded," he said. "Betray us, and you shall feel the weight of my vengeance."

Renee turned her back upon him; but knelt beside her young mistress, and kissed the pretty, jewelled hand with rapturous fervour.

"As if Renee wanted rewards for serving her golden-haired daughter of the sun—her lily-faced pet!" she murmured, with strong emotion. "She will die for her, if need be—die and make no sign!"

"I know it," said Cecile, caressingly. "Mr. Forsythe meant no harm, Renee. But you know that you will share my prosperity. When Redwoode belongs to me, you shall sit all day long in the drawing-room, dressed in silks, with jewels in your ears, and you shall have servants to wait upon you as in your youthful days."

Her words had power to restore the calm to Renee's face, and the business under consideration was again discussed.

At length, the arrangements all completed, Mr. Forsythe retreated to his own apartments to write his letter to Mr. Sorel, and Cecile

arose and laid aside her bridal veil and flowers. Her robe was too becoming to be so soon discarded; besides, she wished to lose no time in visiting Lady Redwoode. She looked very fair and pretty, as she finally left the room, and made her way to the apartments of the Baroness.

Her ladyship was reclining on a couch, her festive garments exchanged for a plainer, less significant attire. She looked pale, sad, and deeply troubled. She had just learned that Mr. Anchester had gone away, and without knowing of her desire to see him. She fancied that she saw Cecile's hand in his departure, and blamed herself severely for having been so confidential with Mr. Forsythe that morning.

The scales had nearly fallen from her eyes at last, and Cecile comprehended that her own footing had become precarious.

She crossed the room and knelt beside the Baroness, with an assumption of childlike airs, and said with pretty blushes:—

"Dear mamma, I am come to ask a favour—a great favour. Will you grant it?"

"I can tell better when I know what it is," replied Lady Redwoode, coldly.

"I want to go somewhere on a little bridal tour, mamma. I want to see something more of England, and it is so dismal here at Redwoode now that Hellice is gone. I cannot go, unless you will go with us."

"You ask too much, Cecile. I cannot go. Hellice may return at any moment, and I must be here to receive her!"

A thought flashed across Cecile's fertile brain, and she put it into good use.

"But, mamma," she said, "Andrew has got track of Hellice. She is somewhere on the northern coast, boarding in a family, I believe. Mr. Anchester told Andrew so, and I should like to go for my poor cousin. She has been punished enough for her errors. Do let us go for her, mamma!"

Lady Redwoode put one hand under Cecile's chin, raising her face so that she could read it like the open pages of a book. Cecile exercised all her powers of dissimulation, and forced into her countenance a look of truthfulness, frankness, and simple honesty that deceived the Baroness, and might well have deceived Lavater.

"How did Mr. Anchester know of Hellice's movements?" she asked.

Cecile replied by inventing a plausible tale, owing to a previous acquaintance with Mr. Anchester in India, describing him as Hellice's lover, stigmatising him as a gambler and adventurer, and expressing her fears that he would compel Hellice into a marriage with him.

"We will follow him then at once," declared her ladyship. "Let us set out by the evening train. Get ready without delay."

She dismissed Cecile with this injunction, and set to work with feverish haste to prepare for her journey. No doubts of Cecile's truthfulness occurred to her. No imagination of personal harm crossed her mind. She saw no motive for a falsehood, and so believed Cecile's statement unquestioningly.

Mr. Forsythe was soon made aware of the success of his plans, and his delight was great. It suited him better, however, to postpone the journey until the morrow, and it seemed as if fortune were bestowing her choicest favours upon him; for the anxiety of the past few weeks, supplemented by the day's excitement, brought upon Lady Redwoode a severe nervous headache which effectually put off all travelling.

The day passed drearily enough for a marriage-day. Cecile was assiduous in her attentions to the Baroness, and flattered herself that she recovered much lost ground. Mr. Kenneth regarded her filial devotion as very charming, and took occasion to praise Cecile to her husband, and to speak condemnatorily of the exiled Hellice.

The next morning, Lady Redwoode expressed herself well enough for her journey, the car-

riage was brought round, and the little party took their seats, and were driven to Wharton. Renee was found in the waiting-room at the station, she having gone on in advance, but the Baroness made no objections to the woman's presence, attaching no significance to it. The tickets were purchased, and the travellers were soon whirling northward in an express train.

It was two hours past noon when they alighted from their coach at a pretty rural village in the northern part of England. They went immediately to the principal inn, ordered rooms and a repast, and were served in due course of time. As they gathered about the table, in the small private parlour, Mr. Forsythe said:

"Our journey is almost accomplished. It is but three or four miles from the place where Hellice has gained a home. The sky threatens a shower and I think we had better remain where we are for an hour or two. You both look fatigued, Lady Redwoode especially, and an hour's rest will do you no harm."

This arrangement met with no dissent, and the ladies retired to their rooms as soon as dinner was over for a brief repose. Mr. Forsythe, with a satisfied smile, hurried downstairs, hired the best horse at command, and set out for his destination—the house that had been advertised to be let.

He was gone nearly two hours, but the time had been well spent, if one might judge by the expression of his eyes and face. He mounted the inn stairs, whistling softly to himself, and passed into his chamber to remove the dust of the road from his garments. He then returned to the little parlour, where the ladies, in travelling attire, awaited him.

"I beg your pardon, Lady Redwoode, for compelling you to wait so long," he said. "I fancied you were still asleep. The carriage is waiting."

The Baroness immediately arose, as did Cecile, and Mr. Forsythe conducted the ladies to the carriage that was waiting in the courtyard. Renee mounted to the box beside the driver, the luggage was put on, unnoticed by Lady Redwoode, and the carriage started.

"You are sure that Hellice is near here, Andrew?" asked the Baroness, with a sudden anxiety. "You are sure that we are not upon a false trail?"

"Quite sure," was the prompt response. "Mr. Anchester came to this village yesterday, and took the direction we are now taking."

Lady Redwoode aroused herself and looked keenly at the young couple beside her, as if some faint suspicion of intended wrong had entered her mind. She was tempted to ask questions which for the first time occurred to her, but she checked herself, and sank into a watchful silence.

#### CHAPTER XXXVI.

Hellice, in her retreat at the Rookery, was unconscious of the threatening shadows that had begun to gather around the Lady of Redwoode. The young girl was seemingly contented in her new home. She spent much of her time out of doors among the odorous plants, down by the river side, in the gardens, and on the adjacent mountain-tops, and the result of her rambles might have been found in her blooming cheeks, her brightening eyes, and her increasing spirit of cheerfulness.

Her occupations were few and simple. She made sketches of the prettiest bits of scenery in the vicinity, visited some of the labourers' cottages, made a few purchases at the nearest village, and employed herself, after a dainty fashion, in making additions to her now scanty wardrobe.

She had an aversion to what is termed "fancy-work," and Mrs. Hartley soon discovered that this aversion extended itself to any employment of the needle. The housekeeper, therefore, relieved her guest of her labours in that way, paying no heed to Hellice's smiling remonstrances.



The duties of companion were soon lost sight of entirely. Mrs. Hartley found it difficult to keep up the rôle of rector's widow. She was most at ease in her ample kitchen, and she did not hesitate to confess this fact.

She sank, in truth, into her proper position of housekeeper, and elevated Hellice to the post of mistress, taking care not to alarm the young lady by a too prominent exposition of the real state of affairs.

The maiden came and went at her will, wandered through the gray old house, and through the wilderness-like gardens, plucked the few vagrant flowers that bloomed amidst the thick weeds and grasses, and exercised all the privileges of an owner of the dwelling.

She felt more freedom here than she had felt at Redwoode.

There were no sharp nor suspicious eyes to mark and misinterpret her movements or manners; and there was no sad and tender gaze to thrill her heart with incomprehensible yearning.

Mrs. Hartley loved her with a respectful devotion, and Sandy's admiration and deepened into the blind worship that a devotee might yield his saint. He followed her about like a dog, anticipated her wishes, believed himself her protector, and, in his own mind, fancied her the heroine of his favourite novels.

In this quiet, simple home, Hellice recovered her strength and courage. She resolutely refused to mourn over her trials and griefs.

A quiet and unwavering trust in Heaven, and its protecting love, was her steadfast anchor in the storms that had assailed her, and which had only paused to gather renewed strength to withstand their buffetings.

She cultivated a strong and cheerful spirit, and in a week had become the sunshine and comfort of the grim old place.

Yet, could one have looked into her chamber in the lonely hours of the night they would have seen the brave maiden brave no longer, but anguished, heart-stricken, and overwhelmed with a burden of woe too great for longer endurance. Those hours must be considered too sacred for further description.

Hellice soon discovered that the Rookery was only an hour's ride from the sea, and she made several excursions thither, accompanied by Sandy, making the journey in the rickety old chaise in the morning, and returning home in the evening twilight.

The scenery on the way became a source of unending delight after her Indian life, the mountains and river, rocks, and sea, became as personal friends to her, and she loved them accordingly.

One morning—a bright, fair, sunny morning—Sandy brought the chaise round to the door for one of these excursions, and Mrs. Hartley deposited within it a small hamper containing a host of dainties to refresh the young lady during the day. Sandy took into his own keeping a humble package of plainer food for himself, and stowed it away under the seat.

Hellice, in her broad-brimmed hat and a new muslin dress, one of her recent purchases, and with her Indian shawl on her arm, looked unusually lovely as she came out and ascended to her seat in the vehicle.

"I wish you were going too, Mrs. Hartley," she said, brightly. "I will perfect my sketch of that little bay, and bring you a whole load of sea-weeds."

"You are going to the South Cove, then?" asked the housekeeper.

Hellice replied in the affirmative, and bade the good woman a gay farewell.

Sandy cracked his whip, the horse started, and the housekeeper retreated into the house with something of an anxious look, muttering to herself that it was almost time for Mr. Anchester's promised visit, and that she should not at all wonder if he were to come that day.

Unconscious of Mrs. Hartley's expectations, Hellice forgot herself in her enjoyment of her drive. Their way to the sea lay in the

direction opposite to that by which the maiden had first entered it. The road crossed the valley and ascended through a pass between the hills to an undulating plain that swept down to the sea. Thickly-clustering trees shaded the road for some distance, and the breeze sweeping through them waited to Hellice delicious odours that were more inspiring than wine.

"How delightful!" murmured the girl, more alive to the beauties of the scene than ever before.

"Do you think so, miss?" asked Sandy, with a complacent expression on his freckled face, and a satisfied smile on his lips, as if the praise were due to him personally. "I always thought it looked very well here. To my mind, that hill yonder would be just the place for a robbers' castle, and this pass here the ravine to 'ack-travellers' in. Jest think, miss, how you'd feel to have Baron Hildebrand a springin' out o' that thicket with about a thousand followers!"

Hellice laughed merrily.

"I should depend upon you for protection, Sandy," she said. "I am sure you would defy the robbers and their chief, however great their number."

Sandy was immensely flattered by this extravagant expression of confidence in his valour and prowess, and declared that Miss Glintwick had judged him rightly, and that he would die, if need were, in her defence.

"Thank you, Sandy," returned Hellice, greatly amused at his dog-like fidelity and affection. "I hope I shall not be obliged to tax your strength or courage so heavily. Ah! Look out! Your horse will go off the bridge if you are not more attentive to him."

Thus recalled to his work, Sandy cracked his whip, to conceal his mortification in having been found remiss in his duty as driver, and pulled at the bit of his steed with such spasmodic energy that the poor beast was uncertain whether to advance or to retreat, and finally solved the difficulty by coming to an abrupt halt.

Sandy muttered *anathemas* under his breath, and urged on the horse to a dangerous rate of speed, considering the dilapidated condition of the vehicle, determined to show his young mistress that he was capable of managing even a more fiery animal than the one under his charge.

Hellice almost held her breath as they went rattling over the stony road and across the rustic bridge, and she felt strongly inclined to get out and walk through the pass, but the horse accommodated his speed to the abrupt ascent, and she therefore retained her seat. The pass was narrow, and shut in by high, steep hills, clothed in verdure. The sunshine did not penetrate to this secluded glade except at midday, and to the romantic imagination of the maiden the spot seemed a fitting home for all those fairies, elves, and brownies, once so dear to the hearts of English people, and now beloved by poets and dreamers.

Thinking fanciful thoughts, and dreaming sweet dreams, born of the morning and scene, Hellice said little, and Sandy devoted himself to his steed. The drive was accomplished in the usual time, and the morning was still fresh and young when they came down to the wide and rocky beach, upon which the great, mirror-like sea played with musical murmurs.

Hellice alighted in the shadow of a great boulder, that looked like a giant's monument, and was full of clefts and nooks where shadows lay thickly. Sandy lifted out the hamper, and deposited it in one of the niches that had evidently served before as a secret store-house, placed beside it his own humble dinner, and then apologised for his absence while he took his equipage up to a fisher's cottage, in the vicinity of which was a shed that offered it protection. His young mistress in the meantime seated herself on the rocks and awaited his return.

The fisher's wife came out to the door of her cottage to receive the young lady's plea-

sant bow and smile, and the fisher's children came shouting to welcome her, for Hellice's sweet, sad face had won the hearty love of these simple hearts. The maiden's pockets were emptied of the little gifts she had brought, and the happy little ones toddled home again transported with delight, just as Sandy returned, rowing an old skiff that was as clean as hands could make it.

"You may row out into the bay, Sandy," said Hellice, arranging her shawl as a cushion, "and I will finish my sketch of the cove."

The lad obeyed, working with a will, while Hellice opened her parasol to shade her face, and sang sweet and tender little Hindoo idylls that were freighted with an ineffable sadness. Arrived at the desired point, the young girl opened her portfolio, and proceeded to retouch her sketch of the strip of coast, while Sandy rested on his oars. An hour, two hours passed; the sketch was completed to the artist's satisfaction, and Sandy resumed rowing about the bay and up and down the coast. About noon he directed his tiny craft to a point of land jutting out into the sea, and here Hellice was obliged to land, the tide having left the beach bare for a considerable distance. It was a pleasant walk back to the great boulder, and Hellice stopped at the fisher's cottage to speak a few words to its occupants, and then continued her way alone, Sandy having been obliged to linger behind to care for the skiff.

The sea-air had given her an appetite, so she unpacked her hamper and ate her lunch in the pleasant solitude with considerable enjoyment, and full appreciation of Mrs. Hartley's kindness and consideration. A bottle of French wine she reserved from the hamper for Sandy's use, and the remaining untouched delicacies she distributed among the fisher's children, who again thronged about her, as bees throng around a flower. She then wandered off by herself up the coast for a ramble among the rocks.

It was a wild coast, looking as though a world had been wrecked upon its shores. The wildness and grandeur appealed to Hellice's love of the beautiful and the terrible. She loved to climb over the rocks, to gain a good outlook, and survey from it the smiling, treacherous sea, so full of syren wiles and lures to the unwary. Now she walked along the bits of beach that lay among the rocks, peeped into caverns where mermaids might have dwelt, and lingered in sunny little spots that were strangely out of place amidst all that chaos and rocky desolation.

She wandered on over nearly a mile of boulders and chasms, stopping at last at a gigantic towering cliff, whose summit commanded a magnificent view of sea and shore. She had never ascended this cliff, but she did so now, finding a foothold in precarious places, where a bird might have scorned to rest, and with no thought of danger in her preoccupied mind.

The top was gained at last, and Hellice, panting with fatigue, sank down upon a chair-like fragment of stone, and gave herself up to reveries. The time passed by unheeded, Sandy and the scene alike forgotten, until she was at last startled by a firm, heavy footfall behind her.

She raised her head, startled and half-frightened, and beheld Darcy Anchester!

Surprise held her mute and motionless for a moment, but, with an effort, she recovered herself and held out her hand in greeting.

"This is an unexpected pleasure, Mr. Anchester," she said, with quiet dignity. "I understood you to say that you should not visit the Rookery."

"The Rookery has gained an attraction which I found myself unable to resist," declared the adventurer, with awkward gallantry. "You are the magnet, Miss Hellice, and my heart turns to you as the needle to the pole!"

Hellice bowed very gravely in recognition of this compliment, and loosened the strings of her hat as if they choked her.

She possessed sufficient knowledge of the usages of society to understand that the Rookery could not afford a home to her and to this unwelcome lover at the same time, and already she fancied herself homeless.

She took off her hat and fanned herself with it in a perturbed manner, the rays of the declining sun touching the burnished ends of her dark hair and turning them to the purest gold.

"I hope I have not offended you, Miss Hellice," said Mr. Anchester, interpreting her manner aright. "I came on to Scotland to assure myself that you had found a secure shelter here, and I shall not stay if you wish me to go. My—my cousin informed me that you had made an excursion in this direction, and I walked here in search of you. It was easy after gaining the coast to distinguish your figure on this rock. I wonder at your temerity in climbing it."

"You are just come from Redwoode?"

"Yes, Miss Hellice. I left Redwoode yesterday, directly after the marriage of Cecile to Mr. Forsythe!"

"She is married then?" she replied, looking up to learn from Mr. Anchester's features if the fact gave him pain.

"Yes, she is married," answered the adventurer, with a smile, reading her thoughts. "She was a pretty bride, but for some reason the marriage was quite private. The happy couple, accompanied by Lady Redwoode, went away directly after the ceremony."

"They are all gone from Redwoode!" said Hellice, with a shadow creeping over her face. "The place must seem deserted. Was—was Sir Richard Houghton present at the marriage, Mr. Anchester?" she added, hesitatingly, and with pretended indifference.

"Oh, yes, he was one of the favoured few," declared Mr. Anchester, easily. "Sir Richard was the life of the company, the gayest of the gay. There was a recklessness in his manner I did not quite like, but the ladies seemed to admire the transformation in his character extremely well."

Mr. Anchester spoke this falsehood with the most truthful air imaginable. Hellice regarded him earnestly, and then looked away seaward, shading her eyes with her hand. The wild sea-breezes blew her hair and garments, tossing them behind her like streaming banners. Her pure face, in its exquisite contour, showed against the distant blue of sky and sea, increasing Mr. Anchester's love for her into an all-absorbing passion. His voice was husky with repressed emotion, as he said:

"Hellice, it is not necessary for me to tell you that you are all alone. Your cousin and her husband with Lady Redwoode have gone on a lengthened bridal tour. Sir Richard Houghton left Sea View yesterday to be absent months, perhaps years. Holly Bank has closed its doors upon you. And that is not all," he added, determining upon a bolder falsehood still than that he had uttered concerning the young baronet. "Miss Kenneth has prevailed upon her brother to espouse her cause against you. They both believe that you, without any motive, and from mere malice, attempted Miss Kenneth's life, and the old maid demands justice. Her rector has made her think that you are going about like the Evil One seeking whom you may devour. In short, Hellice, Miss Kenneth has placed detectives on your track, and they are searching for you everywhere."

Hellice's slight figure shook like a reed in the wind, and she turned towards her persecutor with a white, appealing face, and eyes full of horror, uttering only a low and terrified exclamation.

Mr. Anchester met her gaze with an expression of tender care.

"Do you think they will find me?" asked the girl, in a wailow whisper, after giving herself time to realize the whole meaning of her enemy's communication. "Can they track me here, Mr. Anchester? It is not that I am afraid of a trial, for I am innocent. You know I am innocent, Mr. Anchester, do you not? But the disgrace—the terrible disgrace

—to my aunt and to me! I could never endure to sit in the prisoner's seat, and be stared at, and required to make my defence.—And, Sir Richard," she added, brokenly. "Tell me, Mr. Anchester, that they cannot track me here!"

"I hope they will not be able to do so!" responded the adventurer, fervently, his thoughts reverting to the detectives employed by Sir Richard Houghton and Lady Redwoode in a veritable search for the maiden. "Oh, Hellice, give me the right to protect you with my life. If you were only my wife, no one would dare to harm you. Marry me, and let me take you abroad till this accusation blows over, and I will then take you to Lady Redwoode and make your innocence manifest to her. A marriage with me would be a safe outlet from all these dangers now menacing you."

He drew up his more than six feet of altitude to its greatest height, and stood before her, with his massive shoulders and Herculean figure, like a bulwark of strength.

"Will it not be pleasant to be cared for and protected?" he asked, in as soft tones as he could assume. "Hellice, I have loved you from the hour I first beheld you. You fancied I loved Cecile, when my heart beat only for you. Accept my love, my homage, my devotion, and we will foil your enemies yet!"

Hellice believed herself cast off by her friends, rejected by her lover, pursued by relentless enemies. Circumstances were against her, and if she refused this present suitor her fate might be terrible. Yet she could not be untrue to herself, or to her love for the young baronet. Moreover, like a ray of sunshine flashing into the blackest gloom, she still cherished the precious, golden hope that had come to her in her hour of extremest desolation, and that hope upheld her like a divine promise.

She glanced at Mr. Anchester's face. It was close-shaven, and all its features were displayed with distinctness. Hellice was not a judge of character by lines and contours, but she had a woman's keen perceptions and intuitions, and she felt instinctively that this man was not good nor true-hearted, and that to marry him would be to fly from one danger to another, to seal with her own hand her life-long misery. She believed that he loved her, that that love might ennoble him, that he would be kind to her, but she could not respect him. The thought of becoming his wife was too intolerable to be considered for even an instant.

Yet her voice and manner were very gentle as she assured him that she could not marry him. She respected his love, if not himself, and was loth to pain him.

"But, Mr. Anchester," she said in conclusion, "I will be your friend, if my friendship be worth anything. You must not remain here if your cousin continues to extend her protection to me, for my decision can never change. Marriage is not for one so buffeted by fate as I."

"You will change your mind—" "Never," declared Hellice, her eyes flashing with uncontrollable emotion, her face glowing with feeling. "Love is necessary to a true marriage, and I have no love for you. You know well that I have already loved. When that love dies out in my heart, there will remain only cold, dead ashes, which no human power can ever rekindle!"

"I am content to marry you without love!" said Mr. Anchester.

"Marriage without love is a desecration!" responded Hellice, the fire in her nature kindling. "It is unrighteous, unholy. So far I have held myself guiltless, and I will not, to save my life, plunge into a deliberate sin, or place between the one I love and myself an impassable barrier!"

"The last argument outweighs the first, I suspect," said Mr. Anchester, with an involuntary sneer. "But I am willing to wait."

"You may wait till you are grey, and still keep waiting, Mr. Anchester. I will never

marry you. Even if I did not love another I would not marry you. You are a gambler, an adventurer, a man of many pretences, but with no real stability of character, no real innate goodness or principle. I am sorry that I have been obliged to speak so plainly, after your kindness to me, but I could not help doing so in justice to myself."

Mr. Anchester bit his lip with anger, but managed to keep his temper under control.

"You reject my love from some school-girl notions, I see, which not even your hunted and desolate condition can dispel," he remarked, with an attempt at coolness. "What will you do when the Rookery doors are closed upon you?"

"You are not my only friend, Mr. Anchester. I have one more powerful than you who will protect me!"

"Who is it?" asked Mr. Anchester, incredulously.

Hellice looked upward, with the tender reverence of a little child, the fire and passion gone from her face, the stormy look vanished from her eyes.

Mr. Anchester was momentarily abashed and confounded.

"You will find the need of earthly protection, I fancy," he said, grimly, after an awkward pause.

Hellice did not reply to this sneer, but her proud face, so full of meaning, showed plainly that it had not advanced its utterer in her estimation.

"Hellice!" exclaimed her suitor, eagerly, after a brief self-communing, "I can offer you more than protection and a home. It is in my power not only to clear your name, but to raise you to a position of which you have not dared to dream. What do you say, Hellice, to being acknowledged as the daughter of Lady Redwoode, the heiress of her wealth? What do you say to sending away this cousin of yours, of stripping her of her gay plumes and reducing her to your present level?"

(To be continued next week.)

(This story commenced in No. 2021. Back numbers can be obtained through any news-agent.)

#### SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS.

Self-consciousness is often a barrier to popularity in social life, and it is a malady from which some girls suffer. Not everyone can be graceful and easy, but one can be self-confident without being self-assertive, serene and dignified without being dull. Morbid fears as to what others are thinking, and over-anxiety as to one's appearance, may be overcome. Little nervous mannerisms, a lack of repose, consciousness of one's clothes, are all bad form and to be avoided. No one can make a good impression or talk agreeably if half-absorbed in putting on gloves, clasping a bangle or a pin or arranging stray locks of hair. It is a mark of good breeding to be neatly dressed in every detail, and never to appear conscious of one's clothes. Self-conscious manners in public are bad form, and detract from a woman's charm.

#### THE BEST IN LIFE.

If I can live

To make some pale face brighter, and to give

A second lustre to some tear-dimmed eye,

Or e'en impart

One throb of comfort to an aching heart,

Or cheer some wayworn soul in passing by.

If I can lend

A strong hand to the fallen, or defend

The right against a single envious strain,

My life, though bare

Perhaps of much that seemeth dear and fair

To us on earth, will not have been in vain.

The purest joy,

Most near to heaven, far from earth's alloy,

Is bidding clouds give way to sun and shine,

And 'twill be well

If on that day of days the angels tell

Of me, "She did her best for one of thine."



## Beating a Carpet

The season of the year is at hand when the good housewife's instinct for raising the dust is active; and no woman who is mistress of a house is happy unless she has her head done up in a sweeping cap and wields a broom in her hand.

Everywhere, indoors, the atmosphere teems with dust, and the woodpiles, and fences, and dwarf trees, and clothes lines are hung with carpets.

Carpets of all patterns, and in every stage of dilapidation!

Carpets old, and new, and darned, and patched, and stained, and generally demoralised!

Carpets of living rooms, where every thread is worn so thin that it is a wonder that the fabric will hold together while it is put on the line; and carpets of spare rooms and parlours where the blinds have been always kept shut, and the gorgeous roses and lilies bloom in all their brilliant magnificence still.

The woman of the house seems rather to enjoy the terrible confusion which tearing up carpets creates; but not so the man of the house. No, indeed! He knows he shall be called upon to beat those carpets, and about that time he will wish he had never been fool enough to get married. He will look at old bachelor Jones over the way, reading his magazine, and smoking serenely, while his fat landlady beats the carpet of his room, and blows like a grampus in the effort; and our Benedict will envy that lonesome old bachelor his sweet serenity of spirit.

But a pair of blue eyes made a fool of him, and now the owner of the blue eyes, with her dress turned up, and her hair covered with an old red handkerchief, and her elbows grimy with the dust she has been raising, has the right to call on him to beat the carpet; and if he refuses, then he does not fulfill the marriage covenant according to the theory of all the women he knows of.

He goes at it like a sheep to the slaughter. He does not want to do it. He hates the dust in his nose and eyes, and the lint in his mouth and on his clothes, and the pounding makes his arms ache, and the carpet has a trick of coming off the line, or else the line breaks just as he gets a good chance at it.

And all the women in the neighbouring houses, as he knows, will be looking out to see how he does it, and they will laugh at every accident he has, and enjoy it hugely every time the carpet drops to the earth, or his stick flies out of his hand, and he swears at his annoying experience.

The blue-eyed wife will just put her head out of the window, and call sharply:

"John, don't for Heaven's sake, pound that thin place all to pieces! Strange that man doesn't know anything!"

And then she'll come down into the yard, and show him just how it ought to be done. And if anything will make a married man mad outright it is to have his wife show him how to do what he has done a dozen times before, satisfactory to himself if to no one else.

But our advice to you, good married men, is to take the carpet-beating as one of the ills of life. Do it cheerfully, bear it bravely and resignedly, and don't let your feelings be much hurt if your wife tells you, after you have done your best, that she wishes to goodness she had beat that carpet herself! She could have done it twice as well!

## A Royal Banqueting Hall

MORE than 800 years have passed away since William Rufus, the eldest son of the Conqueror, founded Westminster Hall as a banqueting hall for England's future kings. It was there that the early Plantagenets held high festival at Christmas, one remarkable occasion being in 1236, when Henry III. commanded his treasurer "to fill the King's great hall from Christmas Day to the day of Circumcision with poor people, and feast them there." Six thousand poor men, women, and children are said to have partaken of the Royal hospitality on that occasion. Edward I. held the festival of Christmas there in 1277. Edward III. made use of the hall on several occasions, and in 1396 Richard II. celebrated his marriage here with Isabella of France.

In 1397 the hall, having become very much dilapidated, was rebuilt in its present form. Edward IV. and Richard III. have kept Christmas within its ancient walls, and it was here Charles II. gave a grand banquet in honour of his Coronation.

An amusing story, the truth of which cannot be vouched for, is told concerning the Champion's challenge at the Coronation of William III. and Mary II. in 1689. Their Majesties were dining at Westminster Hall in great state when the Champion rode in, and delivered his challenge, upon which an old woman hobbled into the hall on crutches, took up the gauntlet, and threw down her own glove, which was found to contain a challenge to meet her next day at an appointed hour in Hyde Park. The incident occasioned some mirth at the lower end of the hall, and when it had subsided the mysterious acceptor of the challenge had disappeared. A person of similar appearance, but "generally supposed," says the narrator of the story, "to be a good swordsman in that disguise," appeared the next day at the place appointed, but the Champion failed to meet him.

The last royal banquet held in Westminster Hall was on the occasion of the Coronation of George IV. The good things provided were on a most ample scale, as is shown by the quantities of food and drink consumed, not entirely by the invited guests, be it observed, but by the visitors who viewed the proceedings from the galleries erected for that purpose, and who, after the visitors had withdrawn, descended into the hall and disposed of all that remained.

The viands comprised 160 turkeys of soup, 160 dishes of fish, 160 hot joints, 160 dishes of vegetables, 480 boats of sauces, 80 dishes of braised ham, 80 pieces of braised beef, 160 geese, 160 capons, 160 dishes of cold fowls, 80 dishes of cold lamb, 160 dishes of lobsters and cray-fish, 80 savoury, 1,190 side dishes (various), 80 dishes of savoury cakes, 320 dishes of mounted pastry, 320 dishes of small pastry, and 400 dishes of jellies and creams. Nor was there any lack of good liquor for the quantities ordered, and probably consumed, include 1,200 bottles of champagne, 2,400 of claret, 240 of Burgundy, 600 each of Moselle, hock, and Madeira, 4,200 of port and sherry, and 100 gallons of iced punch, besides 100 barrels of ale to quench the thirst of those engaged in the kitchen. This was most probably the most lavish display of Royal hospitality on record.

### THE ROSE.

I sent a white rose and a red

To her I loved, and wrote: "If I

May hope, I pray you wear to-night

The rose that's pure and sweet and white;

Or if you wish my love to die,

And if you love another, wear

The red rose that I send, and let

Me know my sorrow and forget,

And try to love again somewhere."

That night she smiled: I hoped to see

The white rose I had called my own,

And looked, as she was passing me—

She wore a yellow rose alone.

## Facetiae

HARD ON CHOLLY.—Gus: "Cholly is over head and ears in love with Mabel Lumbum." George: "He may be in love over his head, but over his ears—impossible."

Mrs. TRUMBULL: "It's too bad that your husband cut off his flowing beard." Mrs. Crimble: "Yes, but he had to do it. I gave him a diamond pin for his birthday."

THE longer a man is married the more he appreciates the unselfishness of woman; the longer a woman is married, the more she appreciates the selfishness of man.

JONES: "That's all nonsense about eating meat being injurious to health. My ancestors for hundreds of years ate meat." Vegetarian: "Yes, and where are they now? Dead, isn't they?"

ELDERLY LADY: "I like these goods very much, but I am afraid the colour is only suitable for young ladies." Gallant Assistant: "Why, madame, you ain't half as old as you look."

RECTOR'S WIFE: "You ought to avoid even the appearance of evil. Do you yourself think the girls who dance are right?" Belle of the Parish: "They must be. I know the girls who don't dance are always left."

BOARDER (who has been helped to steak the third time): "This is mighty tough steak, Mrs. Cookman. I can't cut it." Landlady: "Suppose you try your appetite on it. It seems to be pretty sharp."

"EM.—Mother: "Come, Marie!" Marie: "I'm thinking, mother." Mother: "What about, darling?" Marie: "I'm thinking how the angels put their nightgowns on over their wings."

MINISTER: "I'm glad to hear that you have given up drink, M'Ginty, and become a respectable, sober man. What has worked this change?" M'Ginty: "Sure, yer reverence, I 'aven't 'ad the price of a drink in me pocket for the last three weeks."

A NEW STORY OF ——"I suppose you realise that you are now at a critical period in your career?" said the friend. "Yes," answered the new M.P.: "I am kept awake wondering which of the old, old stories the personal papers are going to make me the hero of."

## Victims to Complexion.

### SOME FOOLISH YOUNG LADIES

If a private Committee could sit daily in our large cities and take evidence of the foolish and harmful habits practised by many young ladies in the belief that they will thereby produce and maintain clear complexions, some startling evidence would be obtained. Not only are cosmetics used in excess, but various harmful preparations and substances are taken in great quantity; and a lady doctor has recently stated that the eating of starch is largely practised by a number of young ladies. Those who contract this dangerous habit, are led to do so because they overlook altogether the fact that the complexion is a matter which the liver and digestive organs govern by keeping the blood pure or else by loading it with impurities. A preparation like Bile Beans will do more for young ladies towards producing a clear and healthy complexion than can be effected by any other known substance. This is because Bile Beans purify the blood, stimulate the digestive system, and correct the liver. While producing a clear and attractive complexion they also and such common ailments of women as headache, nausea, and anaemia; they promote a vigorous circulation; and this in turn gives brightness, vivacity and energy. Their use is followed by good health and that infallible proof of it—a beautiful and attractive complexion. All chemists will supply them at one and three half-pence or two and nine.

## Helpful Talks

BY THE EDITOR.

*The Editor is pleased to hear from his readers at any time.*

*All letters must give the name and address of the writers, not for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.*

**JANIS.**—The line, "Men are April when they woo; December when they wed," occurs in Shakespeare's comedy, "As You Like It."

**A. RHODES.**—(1) The rise of the Pontificate of Rome as a temporal power dates from the year 755, when Pepin, King of the Franks, granted Pope Stefano III. the exarchate of Ravenna, to which Charlemagne added the provinces of Perugia and Spoleto. (2) Confession in the Roman Catholic Church was practised to some extent during the fifth century, but it was not until 1205, when Pope Innocent III. made it obligatory on "every adult person to confess his sins to a priest at least once a year," that the custom became general.

**LUCIA.**—There is no remedy for sea-sickness which will answer in all cases. Many will be sick after a voyage is under way, no matter what precautions may be taken. A dose of from thirty, sixty, or ninety grains of bromide of sodium three times a day is often recommended, but this even seems to be of advantage only to the nature-favoured few. To one who is ill, perhaps the best advice is to remain in a recumbent position, and to keep on deck as much as possible, and to eat only crackers, beef tea, and similar light and easily digestible food.

**MATER.**—If you wish to be sure that there is no quicksilver in your plate powder to injure your silver, and prefer to mix the ingredients at home, you should try the following recipe:—Buy half a pound of jeweller's rouge, and mix it with three-quarters of a pound of prepared chalk or burnt hartshorn. Mix as much powder as is needed into a thick paste, with cold water. Rub it thickly on the plate, and leave it for a little time to dry. Then brush it off with a soft brush, and polish with a clean chamouis-leather. Use spirits of wine instead of water when the silver is much tarnished.

**WILLIAM HENRY.**—I trust you will find the following line to your liking, and that you will consider them worthy of being inscribed in your friend's album:—

"In truth, it is not every book  
That's suited to the mind;  
In some for ever we may look  
And no amusement find.  
But seldom does an album fail  
To please both grave and gay.  
It teems with many a merry tale,  
And many a mournful lay.  
Then, Reader, know, whose'er you be,  
Wise, witty, gay or sad—  
'Tis like the world in some degree,  
Made up of good and bad."

**TOKEN.**—From 1672 until 1787 no Traders' Tokens whatever were struck or issued in this kingdom. In the latter year (1787), the Government having for a long time neglected to issue a sufficient quantity of copper coins for the purposes of trade, and the copper coinage having been forged to so great an extent that not one-fourth of what was in circulation was of Royal Mint coinage, the Anglesey Copper Mines Company issued tokens of their own, and to such an extent that they put into circulation three hundred tons of copper pennies and half-pennies. The example thus set was followed by other companies, corporations, and private traders, and tokens soon became so general that the matter attracted the attention of the Government, and resulted in orders being issued for the preparation of a new national coinage. The issue of Traders' Tokens came to an end in 1817.

**A. M. (Durham).**—If you want the meat to be tender do not let it boil after the first ten minutes. Move it back, and just let it simmer. It is the boiling that hardens the meat.

**MAID MARIAN.**—To clean straw matting boil three pints of bran in two quarts of water. When nearly cool, wash the matting with it, and wipe with a clean dry cloth.

**NANNIE.**—I cannot inform you as to the number of months it would take for your hair to grow thirty-six inches in length after having it shaved. The growth of hair on the human head differs in length as well as texture and thickness, some persons having a seemingly natural tendency to long and heavy hair, while others cannot by any amount of doctoring promote a heavier growth than nature has to all appearances allotted them.

**UNHAPPY JANIE.**—To unite in marriage with the lazy, dissipated young man upon whom you have been wasting your love for more than a year would be to make the greatest mistake of your life, one which no amount of after regret could undo. As you state that you have a little money coming to you upon attaining your majority, the young man in question has doubtless become acquainted with the fact, and is rather in love with the prospect of controlling the same than with your fair self. "A word to the wise is sufficient."

**N. E. (Oban).**—A very good hard soap may be made as follows: Put in an unpainted tub three pounds of unslacked lime and seven pounds of washing soda; pour on these four gallons of boiling water. Stir well and let stand over night. In the morning dip off the water without disturbing the sediment; put in a kettle, and add seven pounds of clean rendered grease. Let boil until thick enough to string off from a stick in fine threads. Pour out in earthen dishes wet with cold water. Let stand in a dry place four weeks, and then cut in the desired pieces.

**ETIQUETTE.**—When making a first call you should not stay more than ten minutes to a quarter of an hour. For an ordinary one, about half an hour, unless expressly asked to remain longer.

**ETIQUETTE.**—(1) It is the place of the hostess to suggest retiring for the night. It is not for the visitor to make the first move. (2) A young lady does not tip the men servants unless they have rendered her an out-of-the-way service.

**JOAN.**—Wash all the enamelled parts of your gas-cooking stove with monkey soap and warm water. All the iron parts should be rubbed dry and freed from grease, and then blacklead. Inside and outside the same. After cooking, the dampness caused by greasy steam should be removed while it is warm, if possible, if not at the time. Burning the oven gas a few minutes will soon warm it sufficiently for the purpose.

**AUTOGRAPH.**—Albums were formerly used for various and special purposes. There were judges' albums, senators' albums, and citizens' albums, as well as those of churches and monasteries. As friendly memorial-books they originated in Germany towards the close of the sixteenth century. There is a monster album in the Guildhall Library, which was presented by two German brothers to the Corporation of the City of London.

**ALMA.**—As you are the one most interested, and of an age to decide for yourself, you should be the best judge as to the propriety of marrying with the sentiment of love in the abstract. So far as my experience goes marriages "of convenience," or, in other and plainer terms, those contracted on the part of the wife for no other purpose than bettering her circumstances in the way of providing herself with a good home, or raising herself thereby to an higher position, have invariably proved a dismal failure. True love is the only or should be the only incentive to marriage.

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**WOMEN.**—The following recipe for removing stains from woollen garments will be found very effectual:—Pick some young ivy leaves. Pour boiling water over them till they are well covered. Stand them for twenty-four hours in a cool place. Strain off the water, and rub it on the material with a piece of clean rag.

**BERTHA.**—Nothing you can say would make me think you unintelligent and dull. You have been a little snubbed or a little teased, and perhaps being over-sensitive you have got to imagine that you are unattractive. No one so intelligent and bright could really be uninteresting and unattractive. Your shyness keeps you back, but I prophesy you will come out like the Ugly Duckling one of these days. It is very bad for a girl to be brought up so quietly, so that when she is suddenly plunged into society she feels at a loss.

**ELIZABETH.**—"The Luck of Edenhall" is the name given to a crystal goblet in the possession of the Musgraves of Edenhall, in Cumberland. According to tradition, it was presented to the family by a fairy, who warned them that good fortune would depart from Edenhall if ever the glass were broken. I believe the glass still exists, and is carefully treasured. A German poet used the legend as the groundwork of a ballad which has been translated into English by Longfellow under the name of "The Luck of Edenhall."

**H. B. (Cardiff).**—The whole discussion as to the relative superiority or inferiority of "Man" or "Woman" is utterly idle and stupid. There is no superiority or inferiority in the case. Man and woman are perfect and complete equals. They exactly balance and supplement one another. Each is necessary to the other's existence, happiness, and well-being. Neither could carry on the world without the other. One is just as great as the other, and just as little; just as wise and just as foolish; just as mean and just as magnanimous.

**SENSITIVE CATHY.**—Although you have given me full particulars of the case, it is still difficult to advise you in regard to your friend. Some men are not easy to understand, particularly the quiet, cautious, shy men, of whom your friend is apparently a type, and he may like you very much, although he is too nervous to show his preference. On the other hand, he may wish to be your friend only—that is, he likes your society, but does not wish to marry you. Apparently you are very much in love with him; but you are very sensible and practical about it, and will not, I am sure, force your society upon him. There is no necessity to avoid the young man, but do not place yourself in his way. Let him take the initiative for a time, and see how it answers. You have given him to understand that you like him very much; that is quite sufficient. It is for him to do the rest.

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